

Greece, Turkey use media as weapon

ATHENS (AFP) — More than 100 journalists were treated to a cruise in the Aegean Sea Saturday as Greece and Turkey organised rival excursions to a disputed islet region amid accusations of violating each other's airspace. In a clash of the cruises, more than 70 reporters were escorted to the islet called Kardak by Turkey and Imita by Greece by a Turkish patrol boat, while some 30 journalists took part in another trip organised by the Greek government. The vessels did not meet, but both capitals insisted their own airspace had been violated by the other country's air force. Greek Defence Minister Gerassimos Arsenis said Turkish jets flew into Greek airspace in the zone five times Saturday, adding it was a daily occurrence but Greek planes "respond effectively and decisively, as they did today." Meanwhile, a Turkish military spokesman said two Greek planes had violated Turkish airspace by overflying the Athens-organised boat trip. The two countries came to the brink of war in January over the sovereignty of the rocky islet, located a few miles off the Turkish mainland, when U.S. diplomatic pressure prevented them from armed conflict.

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King, Crown Prince condole Ben Ali

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan condoleled Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali on the death of his brother Ali Mounir Ben Ali. Deputising for them was Jordan's Ambassador to Tunisia Haidar Mahmoud, who conveyed to Mr. Ben Ali the King's and Crown Prince's deep sorrow for the death of the president's brother and wished the president good health.

Mirai promoted to field marshal

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued on Saturday promoting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Lieutenant General Abdul Hafiz Mirai to the rank of field Marshal as of May 16, 1996.

2 killed in clash in Israeli Arab village

NAZARETH (AFP) — Two people were killed and 15 injured in two days of fighting between rival clans in an Arab village near Nazareth, police said Saturday. The two groups, which clashed Friday and Saturday, are contesting the leadership of the municipal council of the 1,500-strong bedouin village of Kabieh. An argument between the two factions broke out on Friday night and fighting erupted with hunting rifles, military weapons and axes.

Guerrillas attack SLA patrol in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (AP) — Guerrillas ambushed a patrol of Israeli soldiers in occupied South Lebanon with a roadside bomb Saturday, security sources said. No casualties were reported in the attack near the village of Arab Salim in the central sector of Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone" north of the border. But Israeli forces and their allies of the South Lebanon Army retaliated by shelling suspected guerrilla hideouts and infiltration trails near the hills of Jabal Al Rafiq north of the occupied border strip. There was no immediate report of casualties from the shelling, the sources reported, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Palestinians, Israelis protest closure

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Dozens of Palestinian and Israeli youths held a protest on either side of the entrance to the Gaza Strip on Saturday to protest the Israeli army's blockade of the autonomous Palestinian territories. The Palestinian group, waving banners with the slogans "No to the closures" and "No to collective punishment," gathered at the Palestinian side of the Erez crossing into the autonomous territory. The Israelis from the movement "Peace Now" were prevented from joining the Palestinian group on the other side of the crossing by Israeli soldiers.

Yemeni floods kill 3, displace 5,000

SANAA (AP) — Flash floods caused by heavy rain killed three people and left 5,000 homeless in the southern city of Taiz, security sources said. Many homes in the city of one million inhabitants 200 kilometres south of Sanaa were destroyed, the sources said.

Aznar visits Morocco May 27-28

RABAT (R) — Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, in power for barely two weeks, will pay a two-day official visit to Morocco from May 27, Moroccan news agency MAP said on Saturday. MAP said a meeting between Mr. Aznar and King Hassan was planned.

Ghali hopes to announce Iraq oil sale accord soon

DUBAI (Agencies) — U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said he hoped to announce in the next few days an oil-for-food deal with Iraq, according to an interview published Saturday.

"I have great hope of being able to say in coming days that we have succeeded in reaching an accord," Dr. Ghali was quoted as saying in the London-based Arabic daily Al Hayat.

The secretary general said an eventual accord should "assure a balance" between the "principle of sovereignty and the territorial integrity in Iraq, and placing under (U.N.) control the sale of petroleum, the purchase of food and the distribution of part of this to the three provinces in northern Iraq," controlled by Iraqi Kurds.

Dr. Ghali, who gave the interview in Moscow, is to return to New York for consultations Sunday with his deputy and legal adviser, Hans Corell, who negotiated the deal with Iraq.

The oil deal, if concluded, would mean the first humanitarian exception to crippling sanctions which have been in force against Baghdad since its August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

But Iraq has until now refused to implement the oil-for-food deal, contained in Resolution 986 adopted in April last year, on the grounds that it violates Iraqi sovereignty.

Iraq's official newspapers gave mixed signals on Saturday on Baghdad's possible response to the draft agreement with the United Nations.

While a government newspaper lambasted the United States and Britain for attempts to thwart a deal, another official daily told Iraqis "victory" over U.N. trade sanctions was near.

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finances of the unfair embargo, the Iraqis under President Saddam Hussein feel that victory is within reach," he added.

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King receives message from Saudi crown prince on bilateral ties, latest developments

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday received a message from Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah on Jordanian-Saudi relations and the latest developments in the Middle East, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The message from Prince Abdullah, who also heads the Saudi National Guard, was delivered to the King by Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al Tuwajer, deputy commander of the National Guard.

The message focused on "bilateral relations and the latest developments in the region," Petra said without elaboration.

The King's meeting with the Saudi official was attended by Prime Minister (Continued on page 7)



His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday receives Sheikh Abdul Aziz Tuwajer (centre), deputy commander of the Saudi National Guard, who delivered to him a message from Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah, commander of the National Guard, in a meeting attended by the Saudi ambassador to Jordan, Abdullah Sudeiri (Petra photo)

Demirel escapes assassination attempt

ANKARA (Agencies) — Bodyguards averted an attempt on the life of Turkish President Suleyman Demirel in the western city of Izmit on Saturday, the domestic Anatolia news agency reported.

A suspect was detained after he tried to shoot the president with a handgun, the news agency said.

One shot was fired, injuring a journalist in the foot. A police officer was also hurt.

Informed sources at the scene said the suspect — dressed in jeans and sporting a beard — was a 48-year-old pharmacist, named Ibrahim Gumrukcuoglu.

He was said to be an Islamic fundamentalist and was taken in for questioning by anti-terrorist police in Izmit.

Earlier reports had given his age as 70.

Turkish television channel ATV, quoting diplomatic sources, said the suspect wanted to protest a military

agreement between Turkey and Israel.

He reportedly said, under questioning, that he intended to shoot "into the air" and did not mean to kill the president.

(Continued on page 7)

The agreement enables Turkish and Israeli military pilots to train in each other's airspace.

Mr. Demirel, 71, was in Izmit, 50 kilometres east of Istanbul on the sea of Marmara, to inaugurate several factories.

He had just completed a speech when the attack took place.

Private TV channel Interstar also reported that the

(Continued on page 7)

Moscow says British expulsions unacceptable

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia voiced indignation Saturday at Britain's retaliatory expulsion of four Russian diplomats from London, saying the move was "unjustified and unacceptable."

"We call on the British side to reconsider everything seriously," Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigory Karasin told ITAR-TASS, a day after both countries announced tit-for-tat expulsions of four diplomats in a row over spying.

The announcements in Moscow and London came 11 days after Russia accused British embassy officials of having had contacts with a Russian national arrested last month for spying — a charge angrily rejected by Britain.

Foreign ministry officials from both sides had held negotiations to try to limit the damage to diplomatic relations caused by one of the most heated East-West rows over spying since the end of the cold war.

The document also calls for a delay of 72 hours before Israel or Hizbollah can fire in the case of attacks against civilian targets, which the ceasefire accord prohibits.

But the document does not specifically address retaliation, which gives Israel the manoeuvring it wanted.

The five parties are to again meet at the State Department next Sunday, but it is possible that the accord will not be given final approval next week.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, testifying Thursday before a Senate appropriations subcommittee, said it was unfortunate the agreement did not also prohibit attacks on the Israeli-held buffer zone near the Lebanese border.

In the meantime, the Un-

(Continued on page 7)

IAF assails government in apparent collapse of deal made in February

By Sa'eda Kilani

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF) party on Saturday strongly criticised the performance of the government of Abdul Karim Kabariti in what was seen as the collapse of a deal struck three months ago between the government and the largest political grouping in the Kingdom.

In an unprecedented criticism of the government's domestic and foreign policies, since February, the IAF contended that the government had failed to live up to its promises and its performance lacked seriousness.

In a statement, IAF Secretary General Isma'el Farhan reiterated that a meeting the IAF leaders had with Prime Minister Kabariti last Wednesday was highly positive.

But the statement criticised the government's performance at all levels.

However, he stopped short of saying that the deal struck with Mr. Kabariti when he took office was now off.

The tacit deal covered cooperation between the gov-

ernment and the IAF in internal policy matters, especially in promoting public freedoms in return for Islamist cooperation. Dr. Farhan told the Jordan Times that the reforms Mr. Kabariti promised to initiate had not been "fast enough."

In the statement, Dr. Farhan clearly stated that the government's promises of introducing reforms and fighting corruption were not serious at all.

"The 12th Parliament session has nearly come to an end and the citizens have not felt any seriousness towards the introduction of a fair election law that tackles all the negative aspects of the temporary (one-person, one-vote) election law," the statement signed by Dr. Farhan said.

"We had hoped that public freedoms would be enhanced and promoted and would be better than former governments. But unfortunately we continuously see that nothing has changed. Incarcerations are continuing with the same style used before. Interference to transfer teachers and

refusal to renew two-year passports are still preventing," the statement said. "These practices are bound to create chaos and frustration, especially under the current economic and political circumstances."

Asked about the Palestinian Islamic movement Hamas, Dr. Farhan stressed in an interview with the Jordan Times that Hamas does not have offices here, "but all the Arab and Muslim nation sympathises with any movement that seeks the interest for all."

He said that Mr. Kabariti promised IAF leaders in last week's meeting that any one who proves not to have any link with military movements would be released. But in the statement, Dr. Farhan urged the release of all detainees and called on the government to stop "targeting sympathisers of Hamas since (these actions) are inducing a psychological pressure on the Islamic movement, the future of the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship and Jordanian national unity."

(Continued on page 3)

Israel accepts direct Lebanese role in 'security zone'

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Israel has agreed to allow Lebanese military officials to participate in monitoring any ceasefire violations that happen in the Israeli occupied security zone in southern Lebanon, a French diplomat said Friday.

The diplomat, who requested anonymity, said the agreement was contained in an accord that sets up a ceasefire oversight group. It was reached Thursday by Lebanon, Israel, Syria, the United States and France.

The document is awaiting the green light from those respective governments.

In the case of a violation in Lebanese territory — including the "security zone" — the inspection will be conducted by "the United States and France, as well as a Lebanese officer and possibly a Syrian officer," the diplomat said.

He added that "the sovereignty of Lebanon begins at the Israeli-Lebanese border, and Israel accepts that." If the incident occurs in Israel, the inspection will be conducted by U.S.,

French and Israeli officials.

The makeup of the inspection teams were a major sticking point in the negotiations.

The oversight committee is called for under the terms of an April 26 agreement that ended 16 days of fighting between the Israeli army and Hizbollah. The panel is the product of intense diplomatic efforts on the part of France and the United States.

As for the composition of the oversight group itself, the French diplomat said the "heads of each delegation (from the five countries) will be high-ranking military officials, colonels or generals. They may be helped by military or civilian experts."

The group will be activated within 24 hours after a violation.

On the issue of the revolving presidency of the group, France is pushing for a two-month period, while the United States wants a longer time frame. This point, along with the voting procedure.

The various governments also have yet to decide

whether the group's report should be adopted by all five countries or by the three (the United States, France and Syria) that are outside the hostilities in southern Lebanon.

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Wanted Hamas militant arrested

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel said on Saturday it had seized a leading militant of the Hamas group in the final weeks of a national election campaign dominated by the security issues.

Soldiers shot and wounded Hassan Salameh during a pursuit in the West Bank town of Hebron on Friday. They tracked him down later at a hospital in the city, the army said.

Mr. Salameh is the head of a militant cell which was planning a large-scale shooting attack, probably against Israeli settlers in the West Bank town of Hebron, army radio reported.

Mr. Salameh is the number two figure in Izzedine Al Qassam, the military wing of the group Hamas.

Izzedine's leader, Mohammed Deif, is still at large.

The capture of Mr. Salameh further raised tensions in volatile Hebron, traditionally a Hamas strong-

(Continued on page 7)

Singapore seeks to expand ties with Jordan — foreign minister

By P.V.Vivekanand

State Department: Palestinians have earned release of U.S. aid

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Congress should swiftly release funds earmarked for the Palestinians now that Palestinian representatives have revoked charter provisions calling for the destruction of Israel, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns says.

"The United States government believes that what the Palestinian National Council, under the leadership of Chairman Yasser Arafat, was able to do last month was historic," Mr. Burns said.

In light of those actions, he said, the administration's "message to Congress" is that restrictions on U.S. aid to the Palestinians should be lifted "in the very near future." The Palestinian people made "a commitment to peace," he said, and now "we Americans need to honour our commitment."

Mr. Burns made his comments in response to a question at a briefing for overseas reporters Thursday at USIA's Foreign Press Centre in Washington.

The spokesman observed that the Israeli government itself has taken the position that the Palestinians have

met their commitment. Thus, he said, it is "a little bit disconcerting to see that there are some in Congress who are perhaps trying to hold the Palestinians to a standard that no one else, including the Israeli government, is holding them to."

Asked about the U.S. view of the national elections scheduled in Israel May 29, Mr. Burns assured reporters that, regardless of the outcome, there would be no change in U.S. policy and efforts to help bring a regionwide peace.

While the United States obviously would not declare support for one party or candidate in the election, Mr. Burns said, he termed it "no secret that the United States has had a good, productive and close working relationship with the current Israeli government (of Prime Minister Shimon Peres) — no secret at all."

He said the United States continues to believe that "the atmosphere is conducive" to achieving peace agreements between Israel and its neighbouring states of Syria and Lebanon "at some point in the near future" and that

talks can be rescheduled fairly quickly.

On another issue, the spokesman expressed irritation at some European nations for not having taken a more forceful posture on international problems, particularly involving Iran and Cuba.

"I think this administration has had to stand up to the difficult issues — and Cuba and Iran are two of them — and maybe put the interests of the world on our shoulders, and it would be nice to see some of our European partners join us in that," he said.

Specifically with regard to Iran, Mr. Burns said, "We don't believe that the European policy of a critical dialogue has succeeded in any measurable way."

"We think it's time that the Europeans woke up to that and joined us in trying to isolate a regime in Tehran that right now is trying to develop a nuclear weapons capability, and that we know is right now transferring arms to Hizbollah in Lebanon and financing other terrorists around the world," he said.



DEMAND FOR END TO SIEGE: Palestinian youth activists hold placards during a protest against the Israel closure of the Gaza Strip on Saturday. Israel imposed the closure in the self-rule area three months ago which makes the lives of Palestinians very difficult. Residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have been staging almost daily demonstrations against the blockade. On Thursday, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres ordered the closure tightened ahead of the May 29 general elections in Israel (Reuters photo)

Aid workers held in Somaliland village after May 9 kidnap

HARGEISA, Somaliland (R) — Three aid workers, a German, Briton and Somali, were on Saturday "under the protection" of villagers in northeast Somaliland after being kidnapped earlier by gunmen, aid workers said.

The exact status of the three, staff of the German aid agency GTZ, was not immediately clear but negotiations were being held between villagers and kidnappers to try to secure agreement for the three men to leave.

Aid officials said the three were seized on May 9 but quickly rescued by villagers in Hared, 40 kilometres east of Erigabo, the provincial capital of Sanaag region.

Ismail Weis, GTZ project coordinator for Somaliland, told Reuters that Hared villagers saved the three on May 9 in a clash in which one kidnapper was killed and another was badly wounded.

"They are now with the villagers and are in good condition. Village elders and the other side (the kidnappers) are holding a resolution meeting in Erigabo which began on Friday," he said.

Asked whether the three were being held by the villagers until the inter-clan dispute over the kidnapping and shootout was resolved, Mr. Weis said: "They are under their protection."

Hared is in the remote northeast of the self-declared republic of Somaliland led by Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, who says his government's control does not extend to all its territory.

Speaking from the Red Sea state of Djibouti bordering on Somalia, Mr. Weis said as far as he knew no ransom money had been requested and he hoped the three would soon be able to fly to Djibouti.

A European Union plane was on standby in Djibouti to

evacuate the three aid workers when the problem was resolved.

The three were identified as German food security officer Gunter Bischoff, British logistics officer Richard Copsy and Somali Ahmad Elmi, a Somali officer with GTZ based in Hargeisa.

An aid official in Kenya's capital Nairobi said he believed the kidnapping was related to a dispute over the three of a car.

"The president and the government strongly condemn this cowardly and inhuman act," said a spokesman for Mr. Egal. "We take this sad occasion to inform the world Somaliland condemns any sort of terrorism."

"The government is doing everything possible for the safe release of the hostages and is collaborating with GTZ," said the spokesman, adding the incident was kept secret until Saturday because of fear that publicity might endanger the hostages.

He said Mr. Bischoff was repeatedly advised by the government to avoid going to areas which were not under its full control and to tell officials if he did so failed to inform authorities of his trip.

"What happened is the result of his being hard-headed," the spokesman added.

Two British parliamentarians were kidnapped by gunmen in the same part of Somaliland but freed unharmed two years ago. Somaliland has no international recognition as a separate state.

Gunmen have kidnapped more than 30 aid workers in Somalia since its famine fuelled by civil war in 1992. All were freed after sometimes lengthy negotiations and agencies usually say no ransom was paid.

Kuwait defends defence accords with U.S.

TEHRAN (AFP) — Kuwait's Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Sadoun said here Saturday that security and defence agreements between his country and the United States were needed to foil Iraqi "threats."

"Iraq continues to have an eye on our territory and that's why the accords are needed to make U.S. feel safe," Mr. Sadoun said after arriving in Tehran for a three-day visit.

He called for regional cooperation to ensure security, despite "fundamental" political differences.

"Neither Kuwait nor Iran can alone guarantee the region's security, so it is necessary to cooperate on the issue without deceiving our people," said Mr. Sadoun. "There may be fundamental differences" between the region's countries, but "exchanges of visits could bring viewpoints closer together," he said.

Iranian parliament Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq Nuri, who was welcoming Mr. Sadoun at the airport, welcomed regional cooperation on security, but warned against outside interference.

Besides Mr. Nateq Nuri, the Kuwaiti official is to hold talks with President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

Iran is fiercely opposed to the presence of western, notably American, forces in the Gulf, where they have been stationed since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tunisian opposition deputy arrested

TUNIS (R) — An opposition member of the Tunisian parliament was arrested on Saturday and charged with disclosing secrets to an agent for Libya, judicial sources said. The sources said Khemais Chammar, who was stripped of his parliamentary immunity six months ago to allow his prosecution, was accused of handing over secret documents to a Belgian lawyer working for Libya. They said Mr. Chammar was charged with giving the lawyer documents concerning Mohammed Moada, jailed leader of the opposition Movement of Socialist Democrats (MDS) to which Mr. Chammar also belongs. Mr. Moada was sentenced last February to 11 years in jail on charges of having secret contacts with Libyan agents and receiving money from Tripoli. "Chammar handed to a Belgian lawyer secret documents related to the investigation on Moada's case. It appeared thereafter that the (Belgian) lawyer was working for a foreign state, i.e. Libya, which was anxious to obtain information on the implication of its own agents in the Moada affair," one source said. The name of the Belgian lawyer was not disclosed. Mr. Chammar, a founding member of the Tunisian Human Rights League and a member of the MDS political bureau, was elected to parliament in March 1994.

Egypt to buy U.S. frigates, helicopters

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt will buy from the United States three frigates and 10 helicopters used for submarine detection, the head of Egypt's navy General Ahmad Saber Salim, told the daily Al-Ahram on Saturday. Gen. Salim said an accord had been reached to provide Egypt with the three Perry-class frigates starting in October and the Sh2G helicopters in early 1997. The general did not reveal the cost of the contract, but said the last warship to be bought by Egypt from the U.S. was a Knox-class destroyer. Egypt received some \$1.2 billion in U.S. military aid every year. Gen. Salim made the comments at the close of five days of joint naval manoeuvres between Egypt, France and Italy off Egypt's Mediterranean coast. Thirteen ships, including two submarines, took part in the exercises, which concentrated on subdetection as well as air and sea targeting.

Egypt to complete repatriation of Libyan pilgrims

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's national carrier will transport on Saturday the last of 10,000 Libyan pilgrims back from Saudi Arabia to their home country under a U.N. exception to the four-year air embargo on Libya. "Egypt Air will complete the repatriation of the Libyan pilgrims," whom it flew to Saudi Arabia in April for the annual pilgrimage. Maher Abdul Menem, an Egypt Air official, told AFP. Four flights to Tripoli carrying 1,000 Libyans will finish off the 40 round trips made between Jeddah Saudi Arabia, and Tripoli or Benghazi which carried a total of 10,000 pilgrims, he said. The U.N. gave Egypt Air for the second year in a row an exception to the air embargo imposed on Libya in 1992 for its refusal to hand over two of its citizens accused in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am Jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, leaving 270 dead. Despite the permission to Egypt Air, Libya defied the ban both this year and last year by sending a single Libyan jet full of pilgrims to Saudi Arabia in violation of the embargo.

Iranian militia mobilises for 'anti-vice' campaign

TEHRAN (AP) — More than 200,000 members of a state-run volunteer militia have been mobilised for a nation-wide drive to stamp out vice, the official Tehran radio reported Saturday.

The report came amid a tug-of-war between moderate and hardline leaders inside the ruling clerical hierarchy. The moderates want to ease the strict Islamic social structures and pursue a pragmatic foreign policy, which includes seeking foreign investment.

But the hardliners, who are believed to have lost ground to moderate, technocrats, in recent parliamentary elections, say that would open the door to Western influence and promote vice. They have been trying to whip up support to block any changes.

Tehran Radio said that some 230,000 "Basijis," members of a national militia formed during the 1980-88 war with Iraq, will launch the

week-long drive on Sunday.

The campaign, named the "Week for Promoting Virtue and Prohibiting Vice," is aimed at "reviving divine duties and safeguarding the values of the Islamic Revolution."

That usually means a crackdown on women violating the Islamic dress code, which requires they be covered from head to foot in public and wear no makeup.

It also means that so-called "Western influences" will be under attack.

Basijis are usually unarmed in such circumstances, but in the past the government has been hard pressed to rein them in once they are let loose.

Even men wearing sunglasses or short-sleeved shirts have sometimes been beaten up or given verbal warnings by Basijis who insist that such shirts are immodest and that sunglasses smack too much of Western decadence.

Sudan denies report of violence in prison

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — A Sudanese police official denied on Saturday a newspaper report that 95 military men jailed for trying to oust the government had taken control of their prison after bloody clashes with its guards.

The official Sudanese news agency SUNA quoted police spokesman Major-General Al Zubeir Ibrahim Al Zubeir as saying the report of the prison takeover in the privately-owned daily Al Rai Al Akhar newspaper on Friday was not true.

The paper had said prisoners and security officers exchanged fire and four prison wardens were wounded in the clash in Al Duem prison, about 200 kilometres south of the capital Khartoum.

Gen. Zubeir said Al Duem prison did not hold any military detainees charged with

involvement in the attempted coup.

He said trouble had broken out at the prison on May 10 when some prisoners refused to leave their cells to work.

"Some of the prisoners attempted to open doors, they were carrying sticks and bricks they got from inside the prison. When the prison guards opened fire, the prisoners seized Captain Ceaser Tonga and demanded a meeting with the responsible persons," Gen. Zubeir's statement said.

The stand-off was brought to an end after local authorities went to the prison and met with representatives of the prisoners who told them about their grievances, he added.

Gen. Zubeir said two people were slightly injured when prison guards opened fire.

Yilmaz warns Bonn against Kurdish dissidents

BONN (R) — Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz has warned Germany to think twice before granting asylum to Kurds from Turkey, most of whom he said were working undercover for the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK).

Mr. Yilmaz, whose visit to Germany prompted protests by human rights groups over Ankara's treatment of minority Kurds, denied the Turkish authorities discriminated against them.

"I told (German) Chancellor (Helmut) Kohl that he must differentiate clearly between the separatist PKK and (Turkish) citizens of Kurdish origin seeking asylum," Yilmaz told a news conference after meeting Mr. Kohl.

"The majority of them (Kurdish) asylum seekers from Turkey have been infiltrated by the PKK and are letting themselves be exploited by the PKK for political purposes so that they can get asylum in Germany," he said.

"The overwhelming majority of citizens of Kurdish origin living here want peace. But the PKK is using a small, but militant group to disrupt public order in Germany," he said.

About half a million Turkish Kurds live in Germany out of a total Turkish population of some 2.2 million.

The PKK, also banned in Germany, has waged a 12-year guerrilla war for independence or autonomy in southeast Turkey in which more than 19,000 people have died.

Its bloody campaign has often spilled over onto the streets of German cities, where earlier this year militant Kurds clashed violently with German police.

Mr. Yilmaz said Turkish security forces would continue to fight the PKK, which Turkey outlaws as a terrorist group, but that Ankara would reduce ethnic tension by improving economic conditions in southeast Turkey.

Mr. Yilmaz made no mention of the political crisis he left at home. His conservative government has been rocked by corruption charges against its coalition partner and a constitutional court ruling that the government's vote of confidence was illegal.

The Turkish leader, who also met president Roman Herzog, showed "some understanding for foreign criticism" when Mr. Herzog raised the issue of human rights.

"When asked if he knew about a reported assassination attempt on PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan two weeks ago, Mr. Yilmaz said he had heard about it from press reports but denied that Turkish security forces were involved.

About 50 Kurds holding back balloons protested against Ankara's treatment of Kurds and German arms sales to Turkey during the talks in Bonn's government area, which police sealed off as Yilmaz met German leaders.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:00 ... Cartoon — The Flintstones
15:30 ... Black School
15:45 ... Mac and Muley
16:10 ... Italian Soccer
17:02 ... Ordy
17:15 ... La Vie Devant Moi
17:30 ... Que Le Meilleur Gagne
18:00 ... Magazine — Envoy Special
19:00 ... Le Journal
19:15 ... Magazine — Sports et Musique
19:30 ... Cinema, Cinema
20:00 ... The American Chart Show
20:45 ...
The French Prince of Bel-Air
21:10 ... Black's Magic
22:00 ... News in English
22:25 ... The Bold and the Beautiful
23:15 ... Counterstrike

PRAYER TIMES

04:02 ... Fajr
05:52 ... (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:32 ... Dhuhr
16:13 ... 'Asr
19:33 ... Maghreb
21:02 ... 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
— Tel. 810740
— Semites of God Church, Tel. 7785.
Joseph Church, Tel. 624590.
— of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
De la Salle Church, Tel. 661757
Terrence Church, Tel. 622366
— Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.

Anglican Church Tel. 652326

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775201.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457.
The Lutheran Day School Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Moderate weather conditions will prevail with temperatures remaining around average and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 14 / 27
Amman 27, Amman 31, Humidity readings: Amman 32 per cent, Amman 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121

NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mikhles Halaseh 819230
Dr. Rami Sukkar 856457
Dr. Ghazi Abu Shikhal 752405
Dr. Yousef Al Faghi 790104
Fires pharmacy 661912
Fordwax pharmacy 778336
Al Adana pharmacy 637055
Nairah pharmacy 626672
Al Salan pharmacy 644945
Shmeisat pharmacy 637660
Nairah pharmacy 626672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ahmad Qani 281484
Alqas pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Riyadh Al Ya'oub 543368
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police

843402
Traffic Police 896300
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 603800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 847467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680103
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53320
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity - J. Amn 644281/6
Al-Khali Maternity - J. Amn 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 623462
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisat 607071
Shmeisat Hospital 669131

University Hospital

845945
Al-Mustashir Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 666164/66
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602249/50
Amal Hospital 607125

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900500
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909090
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)226555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should ways be verified.

Royal Wings (RW) Flights (Marka Airport)

09:25 Amman (RW)
10:40 Amman (RW)

DEPARTURES Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:30 Bangkok (RJ)
07:00 Amman (RJ)
07:30 Jeddah (RJ)
07:55 Larzaca (RJ)
10:00 Jeddah (RJ)
10:20 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:25 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:05 Beirut (RJ)
11:15 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:30 London (RJ)
18:50 London (RJ)
19:00 Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
19:25 Athens (RJ)
19:45 Casablanca, Madrid (RJ)
19:45 Frankfurt (RJ)
20:35 Rome (RJ)
20:40 Vienna (RJ)
20:50 Tunis (RJ)
21:50 Munich (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:30 Senae (RJ)
12:40 Sharjah, Bahrain (RJ)
15:00 Doha (RJ)
15:30 Moscow (RJ)
21:10 Beirut (RJ)
21:20 Doha (RJ)
00:10 Istanbul (RJ)
01:00 London, Beirut (RJ)
02:25 Amsterdam (RJ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights (Marka Airport)

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11:30 Amman (RW)

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21:20 Doha (RJ)
00:10 Istanbul (RJ)
01:00 London, Beirut (RJ)
02:25 Amsterdam (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg

Apple 700 / 800
Banana 600 / 600
Banana (Mukammal) 520 / 520
Banana (imported) 850 / 850
Cabbage 80 / 50
Carrot 250 / 250
Cauliflower 140 / 80
Cucumbers (large) 230 / 140
Eggplant 170 / 110
Fava beans 220 /

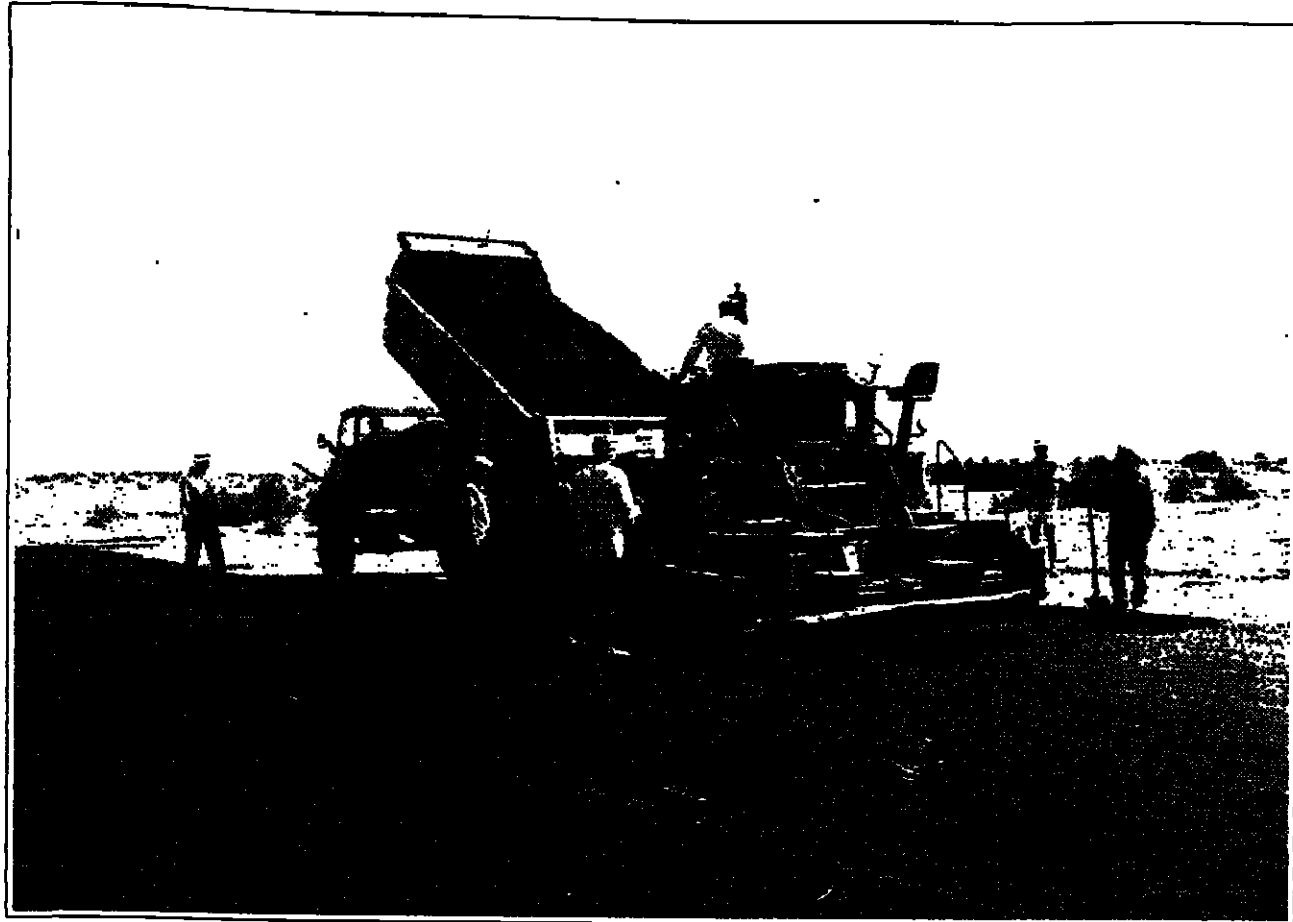
Ministry seeks solution to traffic problems in Aqaba

AQABA (Petra) — The Ministry of Public Works is considering a drastic solution to the transportation problem in the Aqaba region and a local engineering firm Darul Handasah has made proposals for the construction of a commercial road for truck traffic, according to Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Hadi Majali Saturday.

Mr. Majali, who is on a visit to the port city, said that among the proposals, Darul Handasah has suggested a four-lane truck road through the Shallaleh district in Aqaba which would pose no real danger to the environment and the tourism industry and would not affect pedestrian movement.

Speaking at a meeting with local officials and heads of municipal councils, Mr. Majali said the ministry was also proceeding with plans to modernise and improve the road around Aqaba used by commercial trucks by creating several diversions to avoid steep slopes.

The ministry is cooperating with the Jordanian Geographic Centre which is providing land surveys and is helping in opening an international road that starts from Rashadieh in the Qweireh district, through the Disi basin and connect-



Ministry of Public Works and Housing employees work on a road construction site in southern Jordan (file photo)

ing with the Mudawara-Maan road.

At the same time the ministry plans to set up several employee housing projects and a provident fund which would help the personnel save for the housing units. The mortgages would be

paid over 25 to 30 years.

At the outset of the meeting, Aqaba Governor Salem Turk reviewed the most pressing demands on roads within the governorate, especially the roads for trucks at the entrance to and around the city of Aqaba.

He also presented requests by local councils urging the ministry to construct pedestrian tunnels and bridges in Qweireh and Hamimeh and to asphalt the roads in Qweireh district and in Wadi Araba to help solve truck traffic congestion in the region.

Mr. Majali earlier made a tour of the roads used by commercial traffic and visited the Wadi Araba crossing point. He said the ministry was planning to set up tourist facilities at the crossing.

Maan buries seven killed in road accident

AMMAN (J.T.) — Funeral services Saturday were held for seven workers at the Shidieh Phosphate Mine who were killed in a road accident during a severe sandstorm on Friday. The accident occurred 25 kilometres south of Maan.

Reports in the local press Saturday said that the accident occurred at noon Friday during a sandstorm which at times caused poor visibility in many parts of southern Jordan.

A motorist told the Jordan Times that driving conditions were extremely hazardous.

"We were on the Desert Highway intending to go to Wadi Rum, when suddenly this sandstorm hit, and it became increasingly difficult to see the road in front of us. Finally, visibility was nil, and we decided to turn back and head for Amman."

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"We were on the Desert Highway intending to go to Wadi Rum, when suddenly this sandstorm hit, and it became increasingly difficult to see the road in front of us. Finally, visibility was nil, and we decided to turn back and head for Amman."

turn back and head for Amman," said Colette Flaherty, a U.S. tourist.

Quoting a spokesman for the Civil Defence Department news reports said that the a bus driven by Saud Shaker Mohammad, a

Saudi Arabian national, hit a private car driven by Yassin Mahamid from Jordan while Mr. Mahamid was parked on the right-hand side of the road. The impact pushed the parked vehicle over the edge of a precipice, and the car burst into flames.

All seven occupants in the car were killed.

Press reports Saturday also said that the Civil Defence Department officers in Tafleeh Governorate in southern Jordan extinguished a major blaze which swept through woods close to the Dana Wildlife Reserve.

They said Rashadieh Cement Factory workers and local residents helped in putting out the blaze.

EU partnership talks proceed; accord to be signed after next round — envoy

BRUSSELS (Petra) — Negotiations on a Jordanian-European partnership are proceeding accordingly and a fifth round of discussions will be held soon followed by the signing of an agreement, according to Omar Natheef, chargé d'affaires at the Jordanian embassy in Brussels.

Jordan's products sold to Europe are currently exempt from 30 per cent of customs duty.

Jordan seeks to promote the European Union's role in the Middle East and enable to contribute to regional projects, added the official.

Jordan is aiming to secure assistance from Europe to carry out its socio-economic and political development plans which in turn will help secure a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

In seeking the partnership agreement, Jordan is aiming to secure assistance from Europe to carry out its socio-economic and political development plans which in turn will help secure a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

A 13-year transitional period will follow the signing of the agreement during which Jordanian industries will be upgraded to compete with European industries after the creation of the free trade zone between the two sides, according to the embassy official.

The transitional period, he added, requires that all customs barriers be gradually removed except for a limited number of industrial and agricultural products, according to Mr. Natheef, who noted that

financial, cultural and humanitarian fields.

Last March, Minister of Information Marwan Muasher told journalists that the European Union agreed to exempt 82 Jordanian agricultural commodities from customs duty in line with a European partnership programme with Mediterranean countries.

TCC's \$175m plan to meet Jordan's communication needs for 30 years, says official

By Iyad Waqfi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a bid to meet the country's increasing demand for telephone services the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) is implementing an ambitious plan estimated to cost \$175 million over the next three years to create an additional 440,000 new telephone lines, according to TCC Director General Walid Dweik.

He told a press conference that the plan would meet the Kingdom's communication needs for at least 30 years.

As part of the plan the existing 340,000 six-digit telephone numbers will gradually be converted to a seven-digit system over two years, according to Mr. Dweik who said the seven-digit system first be introduced in the Tla Al Ali district of Amman.

The main reason for the change is to allow for an increase in the number of subscribers to the TCC telephone service, said Mr. Dweik adding that the move to seven digits was taken upon the recommendation of a team of experts.

The seven-digit system will be in force

starting May 25, Jordan's Independence Day anniversary, and as part of the kingdom's celebrations of the occasion, according to Mr. Dweik.

He said the Tla Al Ali district's 30,000 lines in addition to 4,300 lines in Bassa, Bader and Dabouk districts around Amman will all be affected by the change.

The existing 340,000 six-digit telephone numbers will gradually be converted to a seven-digit system over two years.

The initial change will open the way for more telephone lines to be installed at the Wadi Seer, Abdalli and Sweileh telephone exchanges, he added.

The seven-digit system will be applied to the 8,980 lines in Mafraq Governorate in June, according to Mr. Dweik.

Referring to the expansion plans, he said Amman Governorate will acquire an additional 145,000 lines, Madaba, 13,000, Zarqa,

59,000, Irbid 55,000, Ajloun 9,000, Jerash 7,000, Balqa 12,000, and in addition the TCC will develop the Abdalli telephone exchanges to boost its capacity to 40,000 lines.

Mr. Dweik said that under the plan 21 new buildings for the main exchanges will be set up at an overall cost of JD 14 million, and 3,500 kilometres of cables will be laid and telephone posts erected at a cost of nearly \$60 million.

National conference to discuss future development plans

AMMAN (Petra) — "Planning for Jordan To the Year 2020" is the title of a three-day seminar opening today at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

A statement by the organisers, the Amman Municipality, the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre and the Higher Council for Science and Technology, said Saturday the meeting will review Jordan's plans to develop the Kingdom to the year 2020.

The participants will exchange views on regional planning, development schemes and the employment of advanced technology in analysing data in the course of carrying out these schemes, said the statement.

The meeting, which will revolve around five main topics, is expected to yield ideas designed to ensure sustainable development, create opportunities for coordination and cooperation among the concerned authorities and create an integrated data base to help comprehensive planning for Jordan until the year 2020.

According to the statement, the first topic: regional information and planning is covered by six working papers, the second: planning and development, is covered by five other papers dealing with tourism in Jordan among others.

The third: regional planning and transport, which is covered by seven papers is mainly focusing on the development of Aqaba region and the Jordan Rift Valley.

The fourth, entitled lands and infrastructure is covered by another five papers and discusses among other things the development of Jordanian badia.

The fifth topic revolves around water and the environment.

Working papers on this issue cover the use of water and the treatment of waste water for agriculture.

WHAT'S GOING ON

BALLET

• Ballet performance at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8 p.m.

EUROPEAN FILM FESTIVAL

• Italian film "Caro Diario" at Prince Hassan Auditorium, University of Jordan at 8 p.m.

CONCERT

• Musical performance by Iraqi band Somer at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh at 8 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

• Ceramics exhibition at Al Baidar Hall of Kan Zaman, until May 21.

• Bani Hamida annual spring exhibition "Visions" (including new rugs), until May 26.

• Works from the collection of Musa del Gradaba Espanol contemporaneo-Marbella "From Picasso to our Present Days" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 6.

• Exhibition of metal-made furniture by Salim Bandak at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, until May 31.

• Stamps exhibition by Musa Dabbas at Al Hashimiya Library, until May 20.

• Annual Spring Exhibition at the Jordan River Design entitled "New Beginnings," until May 23.

• Recent works by Ayyad Al Nimer at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 12.

• Exhibition of Photos of French artists and books by Yvan Pommaux and Christophe Besse at the French Cultural Centre in Jabal Weibdeh until May 31.

Singapore seeks to expand ties

(Continued from page 1)

process... since stability in the Middle East is important not only for Jordan but the entire international community," he added.

Mr. Jayakumar, who served as his country's permanent delegate to the United Nations in the early 70s, said he expected numerous avenues of cooperation between countries in the Middle East and South-East Asia to open up in the "next five to 10 years."

He referred to the expected progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process that would help the countries of the Middle East and allow them to interact more strongly with the "countries of our part of the world which are poised for tremendous economic transformation."

While acknowledging that there are differences in the backgrounds and histories of Singapore and Jordan, Mr. Jayakumar also pointed out that the two countries also had similarities in terms of sizes, population and the quest for economic development.

"Singapore can be viewed as the gateway to the countries in South East Asia, he said, in an implicit reference to Jordan's role as a gateway to the Middle East.

One of the key areas where Jordan could take advantage of Singapore's experience is tourism, which is emerging as one of the key sectors of the Kingdom's economy.

Singapore, a country of three million people with a gross domestic product of \$72 billion, received around seven million tourists in 1995. Income from tourism accounted for about 15 per cent of the GDP, said Singaporean Ambassador to Jordan V.D.K. Rajan, who is resident in Cairo.

The ambassador said consultations were underway between Jordan and Singapore for cooperation in tourism, with particular focus on the administrative side.

IAF

(Continued from page 1)

"The government's hesitation and procrastination in fighting corruption and bringing the corruption files to court stir doubts among Jordanians," the statement said. "There is a general feeling among the public that a lot of damage has been done and is still being done. Nevertheless, the citizens have not felt that the government is serious enough in fighting corruption."

Mr. Jayakumar, who arrived here early Saturday and paid a flying visit to Petra, met with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Khaled Madaha Saturday evening ahead of today's meeting, which includes a symposium and then a lunch hosted by Crown Prince Hassan.

Mr. Jayakumar, a post-graduate in law from Yale Law School in the U.S., has been a member of the Singapore parliament since 1990. He served as minister of labour and minister of law and minister of home affairs between 1981 and 1994, when he was named minister of foreign affairs while also retaining the law portfolio.

He has authored three books and numerous articles on constitutional law, international law and legal education.

serious enough in fighting corruption."

The statement also called on the government to stop calling for change in Iraq under the "pretext of lack of democracy and political pluralism."

"All these issues are of paramount importance to our people as we view them in the Islamic Action Front, and dealing with them with seriousness will bridge the gaps and give the government more credibility," the statement said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Taghreed opens bazaar

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Princess Taghreed Mohammad, the honorary president of the Marj Al Hamam Women's Society, Saturday opened the society's fourth bazaar held to mark the Kingdom's independence day. The three-day bazaar includes embroideries, clothes, rugs, handicrafts, paintings, ceramic works, leather bags and other items produced by society members. The society, established in 1986, has 150 members.

Jordan to attend solar energy meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in a Mediterranean ministerial meeting on solar energy due to open in Malta Thursday. Jordan's delegation to the meeting, scheduled to leave today, will be headed by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas and will include as members Director of the Renewable Energy Department Shaher Zu'mot and the Royal Scientific Society's (RSS) Mahmoud Humeis and Malek Kabari. The meeting will discuss national renewable energy projects in the participating states and means of financing them.

Spanish experts to train on document preservation

AMMAN (Petra) — A team of Spanish specialists in maintaining and preserving documents and manuscripts will arrive in Amman today on a week-long visit to Jordan. During their stay, the team members will conduct a training course for workers at the National Library on keeping manuscripts and documents.

Yeltsin seeks accord with rivals before June poll

KRASNOYARSK, Russia (R) — President Boris Yeltsin, looking for support in Russia's June 16 presidential poll, promised Saturday to seek accord with his main liberal rival, but admitted progress was slow.

"I am ready to unite with anyone," Mr. Yeltsin told a rally of 2,000 supporters in the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk.

"I am ready to form a coalition government... The task is not to let those who do not want reform seize power."

Mr. Yeltsin said he was in talks with liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky, but that his rival was playing hard to get.

"I offered him a post of first deputy prime minister in charge of reform, which is his main platform, his beloved child, but he wants the job of prime minister. His pride does not allow him to accept it (the deputy premiership)," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, views his campaign for reelection as a crusade against the Communists who have led opinion polls for months.

But the Russian leader has been gaining ground in most polls in the last few weeks, buoyed by a series of campaign promises, including one Friday to scrap Russia's deeply unpopular military conscription.

One poll published Friday put the Russian leader four percentage points ahead of his Communist rival Gennady Zyuganov, who is winning support mostly from nationalists, the elderly and from those who lost out from painful economic reforms.

But a second survey — from an organisation traditionally out of line with other pollsters — predicted Mr. Zyuganov would win up to 42 per cent of votes and Mr. Yeltsin 27 per cent.

Opinion polls have a poor track record in Russia, where people have a long tradition of saying what they think the authorities want them to hear, rather than what they believe.

The June 16 poll is the first presidential election since the Soviet Union fell apart. If no candidate wins an overall majority in the first round of voting, a second ballot will be held, probably on July 7 or possibly on July 14.

The head of the Central Electoral Commission told a news conference the June 16 turnout could be up to 80 per cent.

"My prediction is an 80 per cent turnout. My dream is 85 per cent," Nikolai Ryabov said.

Communist leaders held a closed meeting in a Moscow suburb Saturday, but Interfax News Agency said discussions were "mostly technical".

The liberal reformers who launched Russia on the road to

a market economy also met Saturday and ITAR-TASS news agency said former Acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar urged his fellow reformers to support Mr. Yeltsin in the first round.

"We will vote for the normal, civilised development of Russia and today that chance is linked to a Yeltsin victory," Mr. Gaidar said, describing Mr. Yeltsin as the only real alternative to a Communist comeback.

He predicted economic problems for Russia if Mr. Zyuganov came to power. "I am sure that the unavoidable result of the Communists coming to power would be that the rouble would stop being convertible, that there would be shortages and the prices of consumer goods would rise," he said.

Other members of the reformist party Democratic Choice of Russia have said they cannot support Mr. Yeltsin because of his bloody campaign in the separatist Caucasus region of Chechnya.

Mr. Yeltsin sent troops into the Caucasus region in December 1994 to crush an independence bid.

Meanwhile an opinion poll commissioned by CNN and the English-language newspaper Moscow Times ahead of Russia's presidential election put President Yeltsin well ahead of his Communist rival Saturday.

The poll, conducted by the Institute for Comparative Social Research (CESSI) between May 9 and May 14, asked 1,058 Russian voters who they planned to support in the June 16 presidential election. It was published in the Moscow Times Saturday.

A total of 27.7 per cent of those polled said they would back Mr. Yeltsin, compared with 19.3 per cent who expected to support Mr. Zyuganov. But almost 20 per cent of voters polled said they had not yet made up their minds.

Mr. Yeltsin has been making up ground in opinion polls last week, helped by a series of populist campaign pledges, but this was his widest lead in the opinion polls so far.

CESSI said 43 per cent of those polled would back Mr. Yeltsin in a second-round vote, compared to 27 per cent who were ready to back Mr. Zyuganov.

The institute issued the following figures (in per cent)

	May 9-14	April 10-20
Boris Yeltsin	27.7	20.7
Gennady Zyuganov	19.3	19.8
Grigory Yavlinsky	9.2	6.5
Alexander Lebed	5.5	4.7
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy	4.3	4.8
Svyatoslav Fyodorov	3.2	3.2

Yeltsin says he alone can stop war in Chechnya

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Saturday that he alone can stop the 17-month war in Chechnya and reaffirmed his intention to visit the devastated breakaway republic to start peace talks.

"No one except me will solve the Chechen problem," Mr. Yeltsin was quoted by the news agency as saying during an election campaign trip to Krasnoyarsk in Siberia.

"We would go to Chechnya to 'sit the table' at the negotiating table," Mr. Yeltsin said, adding that he would be accompanied by his minister Anatoly Kulikov and other top officials have warned Mr. Yeltsin that it is too dangerous to go to Chechnya, where rebels can infiltrate and attack the best defended Russian positions.

"It is a risk," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Yeltsin's first trip to Chechnya since he ordered a massive military assault in December 1994 to try to crush the independence uprising. It would come less than a month before the June 16 presidential elections.

Mr. Yeltsin has proposed talks involving his representatives, the Russian-installed Chechen government and the separatist leadership. The rebels however have rejected any talks involving the pro-Russian government, saying it is illegitimate.

On Friday, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who took over as separatist president after the death last month of Dzhokhar Dudayev, apparently in a Russian guided missile attack, said that "the Chechen side is not planning special operations" against Mr. Yeltsin.

"But giving guarantees is useless," he added in the interview with NTV television from a secret location in the tiny Caucasus republic, where separatist forces have been fighting the Russian army.

"Concerning the right or desire of any Chechen to avenge the death of his president, then this right cannot be taken away by anyone," he said.

Mr. Yandarbiyev said that if Mr. Yeltsin

came, "it can only be seen like this — an inspection visit by the commander in chief of occupying forces on occupied Chechen territory."

A Chechen separatist leader said Friday Mr. Yeltsin will be risking his life if he carries out a pre-election promise to visit Chechnya.

The warning came as rebel spokesman Movladi Udugov said the separatists were giving up defending towns and territory and switching from frontal engagements to a behind-the-lines guerrilla war of attrition.

Mr. Yandarbiyev told NTV television he did not plan a retaliatory strike.

Earlier this week, rebels said they had orders not to attack Mr. Yeltsin while accusing some Russian forces, anxious to prolong a war many have found profitable, of having their own plan to assassinate the Russian leader.

The president of Kazakhstan, named by the separatists as an acceptable intermediary in peace talks, said Mr. Yeltsin ought to use the trip to meet Chechen commanders face to face.

Nursultan Nazarbayev, in Moscow for Friday's summit of former Soviet states, told NTV there was no point in just making a flying visit to the region.

There is no word on when the Russian president may go. His opponents dismiss the idea as a campaign stunt.

However, there have been signs that peace talks, broken off last autumn, could be drawing nearer despite the hardline secessionist stance of Mr. Yandarbiyev.

Russia is ready to grant Chechnya special status that stops short of full independence.

Russian Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov, who said this week he expected contacts with the rebels before the end of the month, is expected in the regional capital Grozny soon. Interfax quoted a local government source as saying.

The source said he may seek contacts with Chechen rebel Chief of Staff Aslan Maskhadov, seen by Moscow as a moderate.

London, Moscow say spy affair over after expulsion

LONDON (R) — Britain and Russia have moved quickly to put a spy affair behind them and restore cordial diplomatic relations after a "tit-for-tat" expulsion of embassy staff Friday revived memories of cold war hostilities.

Britain ordered four Russian diplomats to leave London after being informed that four staff at the British embassy in Moscow were being expelled in the spying row.

The Russians have two weeks to leave Britain, while the Britons were expected to leave Moscow this weekend.

But both governments want that to be the end of the matter.

Russia's Interfax News Agency quoted an unnamed senior Russian Foreign Ministry official as saying "this sort of thing happens even between friends".

"Moscow's line is that this incident will not affect the dynamically developing partnership with Britain. As we understand it, similar views are held in London," the top-ranking official said.

The tone of the British reaction was much more restrained than when the affair broke earlier this month, after Moscow threatened to expel nine British diplomats alleged to have links with a Russian Foreign Ministry official.

"We deplore their action which is redolent of cold war behaviour," one British diplomatic source said then.

On Friday Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine said the Foreign Office had persuaded the Russians "that they were going well over the top".

"It would have been better if they didn't actually act at all, but if they've decided to do it, well, we've seen these things happen before, they're regrettable, but the world doesn't come to an end," Mr. Heseltine told BBC Television.

Diplomatic sources said they believed two of the diplomats being expelled from Moscow had been due to leave this summer.



Miss Venezuela, Alicia Machado, smiles after winning the 1996 Miss Universe crown Saturday. Miss Machado, a model and first-year law and second-year business administration student will reign as the 4th Miss Universe from Venezuela. First runner-up is Miss Aruba, Taryn Mansell. Crowning Miss Machado is Miss Universe 1995, Chelsi Smith (Reuter photo)

Miss Venezuela becomes Miss Universe

LAS VEGAS (R) — Miss Venezuela, Alicia Machado, 19, won the 1996 Miss Universe crown Friday, becoming the third woman from Venezuela to win the coveted award.

Miss Machado, who is studying law and business, beat delegates from 80 different countries to capture the crown.

Aruba's Taryn Mansell, 19, was first runner-up and Miss Finland, Lola Odusoga, 18, was second runner-up at the glitzy pageant held at the Aladdin Theatre on the famous Las Vegas strip.

Miss Machado, who told judges she would rather be smart than rich and beautiful, was crowned by 1995 Miss Universe Chelsi Smith of Texas.

Asked what she planned to do on her first day as Miss Universe, Miss Machado said: "Something I haven't been able to do in three weeks: Eat, eat, eat and sleep."

The daughter of a toy store owner in Maracay, Venezuela, Miss Machado told judges why she valued brains over beauty.

"When you're smart you can develop into being many other things," she said.

The 45th annual Miss Universe pageant was broadcast by CBS-TV to 600 million viewers



Miss Venezuela, Alicia Machado, 19, reacts after being named Miss Universe 1996 at the Aladdin Theatre of Performing Arts Saturday in Las Vegas. Miss Aruba, Taryn Mansell (right) was first runner-up (Reuter photo)

around the world. Other top finalists included Miss USA, Ali Landry, Milena Mayorga of El Salvador, Sandhya Chib of India, Vanessa Guzman of Mexico, Natali Sacco of Peru, Ilmira Shamsutdinova of Russia and Annika Duck-Mark of Sweden.

Kwangju mourns dead, students call for U.S. apology, death to Chun, Roh

KWANGJU, South Korea (AFP) — This city mourned its dead Saturday as thousands of students in Seoul called for the deaths of two ex-presidents and an apology from Washington for the 1980 Kwangju massacre by martial law troops.

Hundreds of Kwangju residents and students streamed out of the city to the Mangwol Hillside Cemetery, burial place of many of the 200 massacre victims.

Altars were set up and Confucian priests chanted prayers.

Elderly women in white, the mothers of students killed on May 18, 1980, when Kwangju rose up against the extension of martial law, wept and hugged black-bound portraits of their sons, an AFP photographer said.

Some 5,000 of them later rallied, singing protest songs, in downtown Keum Nam Street, the heart of violence when hardened combat troops moved into Kwangju to crush the uprising.

In Seoul some 20,000 to 30,000 students, shouting "U.S. apologize!" and "kill the murderers!" marched down central Chong-No Street.

The protesters tried to march from downtown Chong-No Street to the U.S. embassy about one kilometre away, but were blocked by lines of shield-bearing riot police, and headed instead for Myongdong Cathedral, AFP reporters said.

There were no immediate reports of violence. Radical students, who Friday attacked the

U.S. Cultural Centre in Kwangju, charge that the U.S. command in South Korea condoned the South Korean martial law command's decision to send combat troops to Kwangju.

The Seoul demonstrators called for the death sentence for former Presidents Roh Tae-woo, 64, and Chun Doo-Hwan, 65, currently jailed and facing trial in connection with the coup that brought Chun to power in 1979 and the massacre.

Mr. Chun, in court, has said the government at the time had no alternative but to put down the uprising because of the threat from Communist North Korea.

He has denied prosecutors' charges that he gave the troops orders to open fire on the massed demonstrators who during the massacre, and they were simultaneously charged with massive graft during their consecutive terms of office from 1980 to 1993.

Both face a maximum penalty of death if convicted of mutiny and treason.

Lincoln's manuscript on slavery's end nets \$497,500

NEW YORK (AFP) — A manuscript written in 1858 by Abraham Lincoln, president of the United States during the American Civil War, was sold Friday for \$497,500, Christie's auction house announced. The document predicted the end of slavery two years before Lincoln was elected president, and five years before he abolished it in 1863 under the Emancipation Proclamation. It was purchased by Kaller Historical Documents, Inc. for the Gilder Lehrman Collection, one of the largest private collections of American historical documents. Christie's said in a news release, Lincoln, a Republican, is one of the most revered U.S. presidents of all time. He was assassinated in 1865 by a southern sympathiser in the American Civil War, which pitted the North against the South.

Dogs, donkeys descend on Cyprus' palace

NICOSIA (R) — Dogs, donkeys and a chicken descended on the presidential palace in Cyprus Saturday as animal lovers called for more government action to ensure their well-being. Around 100 animal welfare campaigners with creatures great and small marched to the presidential palace where they handed a petition to President Glafcos Clerides calling for enforcement of laws to deal with animal abusers. "Cyprus lags behind other countries in its treatment of animals," said Toulia Poyiadjis, president of the Cyprus Society For the Protection of Animals (CSPCA). There is prejudice and fear and an inexplicable mania for killing animals," she said.

Media boss stays Australia's richest man

SYDNEY (R) — Australian media baron Kerry Packer has retained the crown as the country's richest man with a fortune worth 3.3 billion Australian dollars (\$2.6 billion), according to the Business Review weekly magazine's 1996 rich list. Huge fortunes were made by Australians during the year on the sharemarket, the magazine said. Mr. Packer added 300 million Australian dollars to his wealth through a big shareprice jump in his publicly-listed Publishing and Broadcasting Ltd. firm, it said. The second richest Australian is cardboard king Richard Pratt, whose privately-owned packaging business is worth 1.5 billion Australian dollars. Property developer Frank Lowy came in third with his Westfield Holdings firm valued at 1.2 billion Australian dollars, courtesy of an 86 per cent rise in its share price, which added 340 million Australian dollars to the value of Lowy's firm during the year. Global media tycoon Rupert Murdoch departed the rich list as he is now a U.S. citizen and resident and had bought out his mother's and sisters' interests in News Corporation, the magazine said. Mr. Murdoch's stake in News Corp. was worth 5.0 billion Australian dollars, it said. However, Mr. Murdoch's mother Dame Elisabeth and his sisters debuted on the list with a personal wealth of 600 million Australian dollars. The biggest fall in wealth was experienced by Solomon Lew, deputy chairman of Australia's largest retailer Coles Myer. His fortune dropped by 150 million Australian dollars to 380 million Australian dollars, mostly because of the fall in Coles' share price. The minimum wealth necessary to gain entry to the magazine's 200 rich list rose to 50 million Australian dollars from 42 million Australian dollars. Three years ago it was a mere 30 million Australian dollars.

U.S. sub, ship collide off Norfolk

NORFOLK, VA (R) — A U.S. Navy nuclear-powered attack submarine and a Saudi Arabian merchant ship collided in the Atlantic off Norfolk Friday but there were no injuries in the accident, the navy said.

It was the latest in a spate of navy accidents this year, including crashes of several F-14 fighter jets. It occurred a day after Navy Chief of Operations Adm. Jeremy "Mike" Boorda shot and killed himself in Washington in a controversy over Vietnam War ribbons that he wore.

The collision at 9:24 a.m. EDT (1324 GMT) about 32 kilometres offshore damaged a control plane and the rudder of the submarine USS Jacksonville, which headed for port at the Norfolk Navy Shipyard under its own power, the navy said.

The 657-foot 200 metres Saudi Arabian flag merchant ship Saudi Makah was steaming out of Norfolk as the submarine was coming in when the collision occurred. The merchant ship suffered some hull damage and was reported to be leaking but the navy said it did not seek assistance.

Lt. Ron Hill, a spokesman at U.S. Atlantic

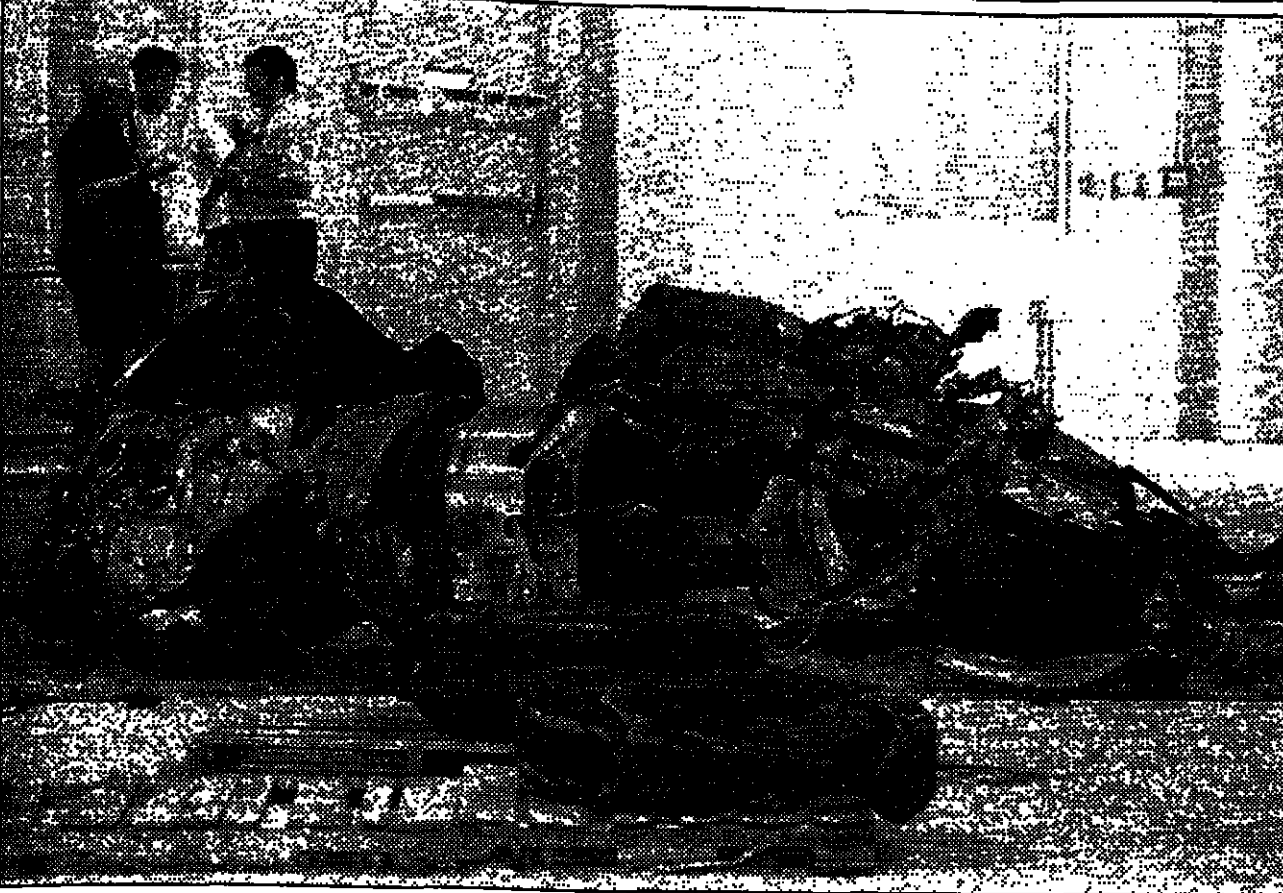
Fleet Headquarters in Norfolk, said the Jacksonville, a Los Angeles class attack sub, was on the surface at the time of the daylight incident.

While one wing-like control plane on the right side of the sub was damaged, Lt. Hill said, there were no reports of internal water leakage or damage to the nuclear power plant of the Jacksonville.

"The navy will conduct an investigation to determine the cause of the collision," the commander of U.S. Atlantic Fleet Submarine Forces said in a release.

Submarines, members of the navy's so-called "silent service" because they remain hidden underwater most of the time, do not often make news. Attack subs are designed for a number of missions after the cold war, including hunting other submarines and surface ships or spying and launching cruise missiles against land and sea targets.

In April 1994, the navy relieved the commander of the nuclear-powered submarine Jefferson City after the sub hit the Pacific Ocean floor off southern California and suffered an estimated \$700,000 in damage.



Valujet Flight 592's engines and tires lay on a hanger floor as investigators look for the cause of the DC-9 crash in the Everglades on May 11. Officials with the National Transportation Safety Board say they have recovered only ten per cent of the aircraft (Reuters photo)

Valujet cuts flight schedule in half

ATLANTA (R) — Valujet Airlines Vjet.O said Friday it was cutting its flight schedule in half to accommodate federal investigators who have been reviewing the airline's safety and maintenance following a crash last Saturday in which 110 people died.

Valujet said it would immediately reduce its daily scheduled flights from 320 departures to about 160. Increased scrutiny by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had already led the airline to delay or cancel many flights this week.

All of Valujet's 51 aircraft will remain in service, and the airline will continue to serve all of the 31 cities in its system, the company said. However, the number of flights to and from most cities will be cut back.

"It is our belief that our operations are completely safe," Valujet President Lewis Jordan said in a statement. "The measures we are announcing today go well beyond the current FAA inspection to reassure our customers that we share their insistence on the utmost safety."

The airline said it would institute "periodic reviews of key components and systems on a schedule greatly in excess of those required by the FAA."

"This voluntary programme embodies continuous reviews and inspections of our aircraft fleet which are unprecedented for any commercial airline, and which far exceed federal regulation," Mr. Jordan said.

Valujet said it would gradually increase the number of daily scheduled flights to previous levels as more of its planes complete the inspection process.

The airline cancelled 25 flights in and out of Atlanta Wednesday, when the FAA began its stepped up inspection of Valujet aircraft. Airport departure screens indicated that most of the airline's flights Thursday and Friday were cancelled or delayed.

"We're being extremely cautious, more than at any other time," Mr. Jordan said Thursday. He said the airline plans to appoint a "safety czar" to oversee safety measures.

The Valujet announcement came as investigators still were trying to determine whether some 50 to 60 oxygen generators aboard a Valujet DC-9 had contained hazardous materials and contributed to the crash last Saturday in Florida's Everglades.

The oxygen canisters, used to produce oxygen for emergency masks aboard aircraft, became a focal point of the crash probe when investigators discovered they were stored in a cargo hold in the belly of the jetliner.

National Transportation Safety Board officials said there could have been an explosion aboard the plane in the moments before it vanished in the swampy Everglades, fuelling speculation that the canisters could have contributed to an explosion and fire on the jet.

In a wide-ranging news conference in Atlanta Thursday Jordan defended the low-cost airline against "irresponsible" speculation on the cause of the crash and warned against a "rush to judgment."

Mr. Jordan said his fast-growing airline was financially strong but would delay decisions on further growth pending the outcome of the investigation.

Pope turns 76, thanks his mother for life

LJUBLJANA (R) — Slovenian schoolchildren Saturday sang a chorus of "happy birthday" to Pope John Paul who turned 76 on the second day of his visit to the former Yugoslav republic.

The Pope looked down from a second-floor cloistered balcony of Ljubljana's archbishop's residence at a group of 97 children who conveyed the best wishes of the nation to the Pontiff.

Joining them in the inner courtyard of the residence where he spent the night, the Pope spoke and mingled with children aged from six to 13.

"On this day, I have to thank my mother who gave me life," the Polish-born Pope said in Italian. His comments were translated into Slovenian by a clergyman.

"I am happy to celebrate my birthday in the month of May, because May is dedicated to mothers," said the Pope, in jovial mood during his 20 minutes with the young choir.

They sang We Love You Holy Father

and he told them: "I love you too, children of Slovenia... You are wonderful."

He was given birthday gifts including an album of drawings and letters from children and a garland of flowers in the red, white and blue colours of the Slovenian flag.

On his way to celebrate mass at Stozice Racecourse on the city's outskirts, a small group of demonstrators held up a banner reading: "Banning abortion kills women". Pope John Paul has made a firm stand against abortion and contraception in his teachings.

The Pontiff arrived in his famous pope-mobile and moved slowly through a crowd of more than 75,000 people, waving scarves of yellow and white, the official Vatican colours.

Wheelchair-bound Matilde Lovrenic, 40, said: "I don't expect a miracle, I don't expect to be healed. I'm just here for this marvellous experience."

Among the ranks of purple-clad bishops and priests in white robes at the mass were the Archbishop of

Sarajevo Vinko Puljic and the Archbishop of Belgrade.

The Pope, on his 71st foreign trip, was later scheduled to travel to Postojna, 40 kilometres southwest of Ljubljana, where crowds of youths were expected to turn a rally into a birthday celebration.

Pope John Paul has travelled nearly a million kilometres on foreign trips since he was elected in 1978, and shows no sign that he intends to relax his gruelling schedule.

He plans to visit Berlin, France and Hungary this year.

On his first day in Slovenia Friday, the Pope told Slovenians "unbridled capitalism" was no less an evil than the communism they dumped in their bid for independence.

In his arrival speech, the Pope called for a "just and lasting peace in south-east Europe that will allow all people to live free and respected in their own land".

Italy's Prodi sworn in as new premier

ROME (AFP) — Italy's first-ever centre-left government was sworn in here Saturday and, in the manner of new Prime Minister Romano Prodi, immediately got down to business with a cabinet meeting.

Mr. Prodi's 20 ministers include nine former Communists, in government for the first time in the 49 years of the Italian Republic.

"Now the work begins and this is the most difficult part," said the new Deputy Prime Minister Walter Veltroni, 41, a member of the former Communist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS).

Mr. Prodi, 57, has already brought his businesslike attitude to government, naming it in record time Friday, just 18 hours after he was appointed prime minister by Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, and 26 days after his April 21 election victory.

The no-nonsense Prodi has also brushed aside a long held belief among Italy's superstition-prone public that initiatives begun Friday 17th in a leap year will be unlucky. Regardless, Mr. Prodi named his cabinet Friday.

Mr. Prodi has identified the fight against unemployment and a clean-up of Italy's public finances as his priorities, which he will tackle in greater detail when he outlines his government programme next week.

On Monday, about 30 junior ministers will be appointed, while on Wednesday the Senate begins a confidence debate before it moves to the lower house.

The centre-left alliance will have majorities in both houses with the help of the Refounded Communists, who have refused to join his coalition, but confirmed "critical but constructive support" for the government Friday.

Already, the economist's approach has had an effect. The Mibtel Stock Market soared 164 points on the announcement to 10,710, its highest level this year. "The bourse is very strong after this news because the new government contains the names investors hoped for," one stockbroker said.

After his appointment Thursday, Mr. Prodi said his government would "tackle the great national priorities, that is unemployment and rescuing the public finances, goals we

cannot abandon if we want Italy to play its full role in Europe."

Mr. Prodi stated publicly that he wants the government to serve its full five-year term, a feat no post-war Italian government has managed, and he vowed to press ahead with institutional reform.

The economist, who is a practising Roman Catholic, appeared to have satisfied the PDS, the main component of his Olive Tree Coalition, which defeated the right-wing Freedom Alliance of media magnate and former Premier Silvio Berlusconi in April 21 elections.

A beaming Veltroni said: "We said we would balance the various coalition members within the government and we have done so."

The PDS had originally demanded three key ministries — Interior, Foreign and Justice — to reward the more than 21 per cent of the vote it secured in the election.

However, observers had said that the Italian Popular Party (PPI) of former Christian Democrats, to whom Mr. Prodi feels the closest, had expressed concern at the prospect of a cabinet dominated by the PDS.

The PDS failed to secure most power ministries although Giorgio Napolitano, a prime mover in the Communist Party's mutation into a social democratic force, could hold a key post at the interior if Italy is hit by industrial unrest during the forced march to qualify for the single European currency by 1999.

As a consolation Luigi Berlinguer, brother to the former Communist Party boss Enrico who enabled the PDS's rapprochement with Catholics, was given the education super-ministry covering universities, training and research.

And PDS member Pierluigi Bersani was given a vast portfolio covering industry, trade, crafts and tourism. However, Mr. Prodi imposed Mr. Flick at the Justice Ministry despite PDS objections that the lawyer, who has defended suspects in the "clean hands" probe, was too controversial.

Antonio Di Pietro, the man who at one time led the anti-corruption inquiry, comes to politics for the first time as public works minister.

Struggling India government warns of early elections

NEW DELHI (R) — A new Hindu nationalist government, struggling against heavy odds to win a vote of confidence later this month, said Friday India may face fresh elections soon if an opposition campaign to topple it succeeds.

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) announced the portfolios of his 12-member cabinet after hours of wrangling over the posts.

But his immediate challenge was mustering enough support in a hung parliament to survive the crucial vote of confidence by the May 31 deadline set by President Shankar Dayal Sharma following elections.

"Only the BJP can provide a stable government and any other grouping, be it the Congress or the third front, at the centre would lead to political instability that would force the country towards a mid-term poll," a party spokesman said.

The vote in the 545-member Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament, was expected on May 30 with Congress and the National Front-Left Front (NF-LF), commonly called the third front, lined up against Mr. Vajpayee.

The BJP and its allies have some 195 seats. Congress has 136 and the NF-LF claims 180 backers. Several regional parties have also pledged to vote Mr. Vajpayee out of office.

If he loses the confidence vote — and he has given no firm indication of how he plans to win it — Mr. Vajpayee will not only have led India's first Hindu nationalist government, but its shortest-lived administration.

Brokers said in Bombay, home of India's premier bourse, that worries over whether Mr. Vajpayee would survive kept trade quiet. The 30-share index closed down 28.17 points at 3,794.94.

"The mood is one of pessimism," said broker Ramesh Damani. "Vajpayee will have to work a miracle to get the numbers in."

Analysts said foreign investors were staying away from the volatile market, preferring to wait until the picture cleared.

"There's no panic, but foreign investors are in no hurry to put their money in," said Singapore-based Morgan Stanley

economist Rajeev Lal. "The rate at which foreign funds flow will slow down in the coming months."

The composition of Mr. Vajpayee's cabinet reflected a careful balance of interests. There was one economic liberal, one Hindu hardliner, one woman, one Sikh, one Muslim, one tribal, one low-caste Hindu and one representative from the south.

Mr. Vajpayee, widely seen as representing the BJP's moderate face, kept the foreign affairs portfolio.

Two of his key choices blended liberal economics with the tough side of a party committed to a single Hindu culture. Critics say that discriminates against India's 110-million strong Muslim community.

Jaswant Singh, a moderate free-marketeer, was named finance minister. He said the government would continue economic reforms started in 1991, though foreign investors would be discouraged from entering consumer goods industries.

But at his first news conference Friday, Mr. Singh criticised the deficiencies and lack of growth in infrastructure, where he said foreign investment was needed, and complained of high interest rates.

"These are not signs of a happy state of the economy," he said.

The Home (Interior) Ministry went to Murli Manohar Joshi, a prominent BJP hardliner in a party roundly accused by its opponents of being biased against India's 110 million Muslims.

But Indian Muslims appeared ready to live with the BJP. Some said a defeat of the government in the confidence vote and its replacement with an NF-LF administration backed by Congress could trigger a hardline Hindu backlash.

"This threat is indeed real," analyst D.K. Oza said in The Hindu newspaper.

More than 3,000 people, mostly Muslims, were killed in Hindu-Muslim violence after Hindu extremists razed the ancient Babri Mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya in December 1992.

S. Korea warns North as tension heightens

SEOUL (R) — Tension heightened on the Korean peninsula with South Korea Saturday warning the North against further incursions on the sensitive border one day after armed North Korean soldiers entered Southern territory.

South Korea's army Chief of Staff Yoon Yong-Nam told his forces in orders issued at his headquarters to deal firmly with any further incursions from the Communist state.

"Take firm action against any further border crossings by North Korea's military," he said. "We will take firm action if the enemy takes even one step over the demilitarised zone," he added, without elaborating.

The warning came a day after seven armed North Korean soldiers spent almost an hour in the southern half of the demilitarised zone between the two countries in violation of the armistice agreement that ended the 1950-53 Korean War.

The soldiers returned to the North after South Korean troops fired warning shots.

A Seoul Defence Ministry spokesman said the border was quiet Saturday. "There were no movements on the demilitarised zone today. It was very quiet," he said.

The ministry said Saturday the Joint Defence Alliance of South Korea and the United States would respond firmly to any provocations by the North.

"The South Korean military maintains complete readiness for an immediate retaliatory response to any North Korean provocation," a ministry statement said.

Pyeongyang sent between 120 and 180 armed soldiers three times last month to Panmunjom, the only cross-

India backs 'renegade rebels' in Kashmir

NEW DELHI (R) — India is sponsoring "renegade rebels" to carry out attacks against separatist militants in troubled Kashmir, the U.S.-based Human Rights Watch/Asia said Sunday.

"While attempting to reassure the international community that they have taken steps to curb human right abuses in Kashmir, Indian forces have instead subcontracted their abusive tactics to groups with no official accountability," the New York-based human rights group said in a report.

The report, titled India's Secret Army in Kashmir, said India hired former militants who had surrendered to the government to carry out attacks against supporters of the separatist revolt in India's Jammu and Kashmir state.

The guerrillas also singled out human rights workers and journalists for attack, it said. A spokesman for Jammu and Kashmir state denied the group's claims that New Delhi supported former rebels' guerrilla activities.

Spokesman Ramamohan Rao said the government paid each guerrilla who surrendered with his arms 5,000 rupees (\$145) and trained him for a job as part of a rehabilitation scheme.

"Some surrendered militants have now formed a group of their own, and they are in conflict with pro-Pakistan groups," he told Reuters. "The pro-Pakistan groups allege the militants have the sympathy of the government."

Mr. Rao said: "We have nothing to do with any of these groups. We have nothing to do with inter-group clashes. We have no sympathy for them. We crack down on militants across the board. If a surrendered militant takes to militancy again, we take action against him."

Police and hospitals say some 20,000 people have died in the six-year-old separatist insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir, mostly Hindu India's only Muslim majority state. More than a dozen guerrilla groups in the Himalayan Valley are waging a campaign for an independent homeland or for merger with Pakistan.

India controls two thirds of the region while Pakistan rules the remainder. Pakistan denies New Delhi's claims that Islamabad arms and trains the rebels. The two neighbours have fought two of their three wars since 1947 over Kashmir.

Human rights watch said separatist rebels, armed with sophisticated weapons bought mainly from Pakistan, launched indiscriminate grenade and landmine attacks on civilians and abducted them to get imprisoned rebels freed in exchange.

"These actions have lost the militants much support among civilians in Kashmir," the group said. "Militant groups should immediately stop all attacks on civilians, including kidnappings and assassinations."

The report lauded India for allowing humanitarian groups like the International Committee of the Red Cross into the valley, but said the government had taken few punitive measures against troops who committed human rights abuses.

Hostages reportedly killed

Meanwhile the Independent reported Saturday that the four Western hostages were killed by their captors last December, the Islamic guerrilla chief who masterminded the kidnappings has told Indian police.

Britons Keith Mangan, 33, and Paul Wells, 23, American Donald Hutchings, 41 and German Dirk Hasert, 26, were executed because they were slowing down their kidnappers' escape through the Himalayas, Nazir Mohamud, who was arrested last week, confessed under interrogation.

After his confession, police centred their search for the bodies in the village of Kokaranag, a scenic tourist spot, only a few kilometres from the spot where the trekkers were abducted last July, the paper said.

Mr. Nazir disclosed that he had been with the kidnappers, the separatist Al Faran group, last July when the Westerners were taken. Mr. Nazir left the group a few months later, but later learned from fellow militants that the hostages had been killed some time between Dec. 13 and 23.

Indian authorities were said to have informed the British, U.S. and German embassies of Nazir's confession.

A Foreign Office spokesman said Friday: "It is very worrying. We are obviously taking this very seriously and are investigating the reports fully."

But he added: "Until we hear otherwise, we have to assume that they are still alive."

On Wednesday the Indian authorities denied the reports in the British press which already suggested that the hostages were dead.

An official in Srinagar, the summer capital, told AFP that the four hostages were still alive, but they had had no direct contact with them.

Japan may act in event of 'emergencies'

TOKYO (R) — Japan is likely to widen the sphere of its military cooperation with the United States so it can respond to "emergencies" on the Korean peninsula and in the Middle East, a Japanese newspaper reported Saturday.

The possible move would be part of a planned review between Tokyo and Washington on the so-called 1978 guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defence Cooperation, the Yomiuri Shimbun said.

Quoting an unnamed Japanese government source, the Yomiuri Shimbun said Japan and the United States could prepare contingency plans to cope with crises in areas such as the Middle East and the Korean peninsula.

Other regions would include the Spratly Islands and the Malacca Strait where crises could "pose a serious threat to Japan," the daily said.

The current guidelines for bilateral defence cooperation only take into account how the United States could help Japan if it were attacked, but not how Japan could help the United States other than by providing bases.

Apart from contributing \$13 billion to U.S.-led multinational forces fighting the 1991 Gulf War, Japan was only able to send a minesweeper to the region because of its constitutional constraints.

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Destructive land grabs

IT SEEMS that Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem and Arab towns surrounding it in the aftermath of its occupation of the West Bank in 1967 was not enough for the Jewish state to tighten its grip on the Holy City. Now we hear about a new, well-orchestrated Israeli campaign to confiscate Arab lands in the annexed areas. This fresh effort leads us to believe that Israel has the ultimate purpose of driving out the remaining Palestinian population from Jerusalem and its Arab environs thus, making its illegal annexation irreversible for all intents and purposes. And even though Israeli and Palestinian sides have just started their third and final stage of negotiations on, inter alia, the final status of Jerusalem, the Israelis appear still poised to seize more Arab lands to preempt the results of the last stretch of talks between them.

The evidence for the latest and blatant violation of the Oslo accords came from the council head of Shu'fat, an Arab village annexed by Israel in 1967, who disclosed that there are Israeli plans to expropriate additional land in his area to construct a new and bigger highway to connect Jewish neighbourhoods of Pisgat Zeev with Rehkes Shu'fat. The additional grab comes in the wake of the confiscation of more than 70 per cent already of the village's land to build Jewish enclaves all around the Holy City.

The credibility of Israel to negotiate the future of East Jerusalem is obviously at stake. At a time when Israel committed itself under the Oslo agreements to discuss the future of Arab Jerusalem during the last stage of bilateral negotiations with the Palestinians, it seems to continue to flout and repudiate its own solemn commitment by attempting to foreclose the outcome of the talks even before they begin.

Needless to say that this conduct does not bode well for the chances of a comprehensive settlement as it raises doubts about Israel's sincerity in respecting its promises to the Palestinian side, not to mention the Arab, Muslim and Christian worlds.

To save the peace process from inevitable collapse Israel should not only cease and desist from further acts that aim to poison the atmosphere over East Jerusalem. It should also reverse what it has already done to prejudice and predetermine the outcome of negotiations. This is the least that we can expect from the Israelis who never fail to remind the Arab parties that they should be faithful at all times to their treaty obligations. Israel must demonstrate to the Arab World that it too can be a trusted partner in the search for lasting and honourable peace in the region.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IN HIS ongoing election campaign Shimon Peres is calling on the Arabs to join forces with Israel against Iran while the latter never ceases to call on the Arab countries to form an alliance with it against the Jewish state, said Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer for Al Ra'i. Both Israel and Iran occupy Arab territories and both are adamant about not returning the occupied lands to their legitimate owners, said the writer. Iran occupies islands in the Arab Gulf region, continues to encourage Sudan to remain isolated from the world community and continues to encourage disturbances in the Arab Gulf states. Israel continues to occupy the lands of three Arab states and continues to launch aggression on Arab states, according to the writer. He also said that both Iran and Israel seek hegemony over the Arab states and consider the Arab countries as an open arena for their rivalry and for their own expansionist aims. What is required from the Arabs to overcome this situation is to rally their forces and join their ranks and so prevent other nations from tampering with their own destiny.

COMMENTING ON the outcome of the Arab Parliamentary Union (APU) meetings held in Damascus, Al Dustour daily said that the declaration announced at the final session draws up the outlines for collective Arab action towards ending inter-Arab differences and embarking on new steps to achieve solidarity among the Arab states. The paper said that the Arab parliamentarians have voiced the real feelings of the Arab man in the street and reflected the sufferings of the Arab people resulting from the continued disputes among their governments; they also expressed their dismay at the continued isolation of Arab countries from each other and the state of weakness prevailing in the Arab World. The very amicable atmosphere that prevailed during the APU meetings and the candid discussions conducted by the delegations reflect a very positive sign and constitute a very encouraging factor that would help the Arab governments embark on steps towards solidarity, added the paper. The decisions passed by the APU do not only call for an end to differences among Arabs, they also call for supporting the ongoing Arab-Israeli negotiations to achieve a just and lasting peace, noted the paper.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Limited benefits of peace

JORDAN GAINED part of the economic benefits which were expected as a direct result of making peace with Israel. Beside the recovered land and water, Jordan got full forgiveness of all American debts, amounting to \$710 million, and part of the British debts, not exceeding \$90 million.

The World Bank and its investment arm, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), financed some public and private sector projects in Jordan. But the main benefit that accrued to Jordan was in the field of tourism, which is witnessing a full-fledged boom, where the tourist arrivals will double in two years and tens of new deluxe hotels are opened or under construction. This fast growing industry will mean more foreign exchange earnings and the creation of thousands of new jobs.

However, so far Jordan did not benefit from the theoretical access to the markets of Israel and the West Bank due to obstacles created by Israel, citing security considerations as an excuse.

Israel all but froze the bilateral agreements, postponed the implementation of transport and trade agreements, and did not allow Jordanian newspapers to cross the borders. One can realise that it is the Israeli government, not the so-called "antinormalisation society", which is obstructing normalisation in the economic, social and cultural spheres between Jordan and Israel. It is Jordan that is trying to make the peace warm, while Israel tries hard to cool it down. This is an obvious fact, although it sounds contrary to the general convictions of both the Arab and foreign public opinions.

The Jordanian benefits of peace are so far limited, but the future has a very strong potential. It is of course too early to speculate on the extent of future realisation of

peace benefits as stated in the books.

Peace, however, makes Jordan a safe place, no more exposed to Israeli aggression. This is a prerequisite for the establishment of large-scale, long-term investments. That is why we now see local and foreign investors willing to invest in building hotels, establish big industries and exploit the vast mineral wealth of the Dead Sea.

We were always impressed by the ability of the Israeli leaders to ally themselves and their country with the great powers of the day, to gain their support in achieving the Israeli national objectives. When the power and international status of Britain and France declined, Israel lost no time in shifting to the lap of the United States. It even tried hard to gain the former Soviet Union to its side, without having to sacrifice or risk its strategic relations with the United States itself.

In contrast to this pragmatic approach, Arab leaders were prisoners of their empty slogans. They were proud of being in opposition to the great powers which can influence, and sometimes dictate, the outcome of any dispute. So much so that the successes of Israel in the international arena were not solely due to the extraordinary wisdom and professionalism of the Israeli politicians, but to the misconduct and gross mistakes of the Arab leaders.

Under peace circumstances, Jordan can avoid meeting the rock head on. It can pursue feasible and pragmatic policies and employ friendly relations to serve its own best interests. Even the American tough stick which Israel used to raise in our faces was successfully neutralised and then motivated to write off our debt, furnish us with badly needed weapons like F-16 fighters, and train our pilots, without having to sacrifice our independence.

Why a victory for Likud would be a disaster

By Thomas L. Friedman

TEL AVIV — The campaign has opened for the most fateful election in Israel's history. With three weeks to go, the race between Labour's Shimon Peres and the Likud's Bibi Netanyahu is so close that even Herzl Lifshitz, one of Israel's leading astrologers, declared: "Tell me I'm a rotten astrologer, but what can I tell you. I haven't got a clue what's going to happen. I've never had this before. I don't see either Peres or Bibi as prime minister."

Well, either Mr. Peres or Mr. Netanyahu will be Israel's next prime minister. And while you cannot predict which, you can predict the political consequences of either man's victory.

The reason this election is so fateful is not because Israelis are choosing between starkly different visions for the future. They are choosing between two starkly different vision of the present.

For the first time, Israel has Palestinian partners for peace. It has a broad peace process unfolding, right now, with the Arab World. This is it. This is peace, with all its warts and rewards. And because it has all happened since the last Israeli election, this is the first time Israelis will get to vote on it, and how they vote will have real consequences on the ground in real time.

That is why most of the election commercials involve Mr. Peres and Mr.

Netanyahu trying to define the present, not the future. Likud flashes scenes of recent bus bombings, while Mr. Netanyahu somberly reminds Israelis that they must fear walking the streets. The present is a nightmare, suggests Mr. Netanyahu, and I will make it right.

Mr. Peres's commercials show booming Israeli factories, smiling Israeli youth travelling the world, and Israeli yuppies driving a yellow convertible, all thanks to economic growth brought on by peace. The present is good, Mr. Peres says, so let me finish the

Israeli silent majority for this process, sometimes grudging, sometimes wary, but always present, and that explains how the peace has come so far, despite the terrorism.

With each terrorist incident that majority dips, but then it always bounces back, says Mr. Smith.

That is why the real electoral wild card is whether some terrorist incident occurs in the next three weeks. Without one, Mr. Peres, who now leads by 5 percentage points, will be hard to beat. With one, Mr. Netanyahu will be hard to beat. No wonder everyone

"The reason this election is so fateful is not because Israelis are choosing between starkly different visions for the future. They are choosing between two starkly different vision of the present."

process that got us here.

What will tip the voting? There are many little issues, but I believe the key to this election is the fact, as the veteran Israeli pollster Hanoch Smith puts it, "that 60 per cent of Israelis consistently answer 'yes' when asked whether they want the peace process begun by Yitzhak Rabin to continue."

From the very first handshake there has been an

here talks about "the bomb" and when it might go off. Israel Radio opened its broadcast the other day on a simple note that every listener understood: "Nothing has happened yet."

Because Mr. Netanyahu's polls tell him that Israelis want there to be a peace process, he has tried to attract floating centrist votes by stressing that he will not abandon the Oslo

peace accords.

He has downplayed his party's platform, which calls for expanding Jewish settlements, closing down Palestinian offices in Jerusalem, keeping all of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights under Israeli rule and preventing a Palestinian state in the West Bank. Of course all those things, if implemented, would destroy the peace.

That is why I believe that Mr. Netanyahu's coalition can only hold up to election day. If he implements his party platform after that, he will find that he has no Palestinian partners, and he will blow up the peace process. If he does not implement his party platform, he will find he has few Likud partners, and he will blow up his own party.

Mr. Peres has things much easier. If he wins, everyone will know why. He will have a mandate to continue the peace process to its logical conclusion.

So let us not mislead words. A Netanyahu victory, at this time when so much has been achieved between Israel and the Palestinians but so much still needs to be done, would be a disaster.

His party will not let him push the peace process forward, and the Israeli silent majority will not let him unravel it entirely. So the result will be paralysis, a dangerous paralysis, and you don't need an astrologer to see that.

The New York Times

The value of corruption

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

CORRUPTION IS essentially an abuse of public trust for a private gain or benefit. The greater the complexity of a society, the more distinct and unique becomes its form of corruption. Although corruption is a crime, it — unlike other crimes — exhibits the following unique characteristics: 1) subjugation of public trust and common interests to personal motives; 2) presence of mutual gains or benefits in some form or another; 3) secrecy in planning and execution, unless a person is so powerful he/she can afford to be open about it; 4) lawful justification to camouflage the act of corruption; 5) involvement in contradictory functions by the corrupt parties; 6) mutual benefit to both the party that wants the decision to be made and the one that makes the decision. Furthermore, corruption comes in three forms: extortive, manipulative, and nepotistic. Depending on the mix of a society, one form may be more present or obvious than another. In Jordan, nepotism is both a cause and effect and probably is the most obvious form of corruption.

Some theories suggest that there may be several benefits to corruption, such as redistributing the wealth, developing a middle class, and cutting through bureaucratic red tape. The latter is definitely a justifiable cause for corruption in Jordan, a market economy that is swathed in red tape and whose bureaucracy leads it to continuous market failure. However, throughout history, ethics and public morality have condemned corruption — regardless of it being beneficial or not — in all its forms: In ancient China, Egypt, Babylon, Greece and Rome, corruption was viewed as a problem. It was clearly condemned in the Quran and the Old Testament Book of Exodus.

Corruption is present in both developed and developing economies and is considered an important problem from the economic point of view because it distorts the market mechanism, causing the following: 1) increased burden to the public as the cost of corruption is transferred to the consumer; 2) increased administrative negligence and inefficiency, especially in the area of public welfare; 3) subordination of efficient transactions to graft-dominated norms; 4) loss of respect for rules and regulation; and 4) increased mistrust of the public sector.

Getting rid of corruption in a society is a costly endeavour and may even prove to be so expensive that the cost may outweigh the benefit derived from its eradication. Such may be the case in Jordan. Before any government focuses on

the corruption of its employees it must ask itself the following question: Are public officials receiving salaries that compensate them for the loss of their privacy and personal safety? The truth is that public officials in Jordan, like elsewhere around the world, receive lower salaries than their private sector counterparts with the added burden of being constantly subjected to public scrutiny.

World Link magazine recently conducted a survey in several countries to measure the ratio of public executive officers' salaries relative to the pay of the average manufacturing worker in the subject country. The rationale of the wage comparison was that if government officials are adequately compensated for their performance, they have less incentive to obtain funds through corrupt means.

In Singapore, the prime minister and a typical minister are paid 56 and 41 times, respectively, the salary of the average manufacturing worker. Thus, Singapore pays its public officials more than any other country in the world and it is viewed to have one of the least corrupt governments in the world. Japan, on the other hand, pays its prime minister six times what it pays the average manufacturing worker; Japan has one of the more corrupt governments in the world.

What was demonstrated in the survey was that if you want good public officials, then you should pay them good salaries: ones that are competitive with those paid in the private sector, in other words, "you get what you pay for." According to the Singapore formula, the prime minister of Jordan should be paid 56 times JD 2,400 (the average annual salary of a manufacturing worker in Jordan) which is around JD 130,000 per year, and a minister should be paid 41 times the amount which is close to JD 100,000 per year. Different ratios apply to different ranks of officialdom.

If Jordanians want non-corruption public officials, then they should compensate their bureaucracy adequately through direct means for the responsibilities, burdens and labours associated with public office. Otherwise, officials are forced to look to other forms of compensation as in the U.S., a country which is renowned for the low pay of its public officials, where civil servants take on consulting jobs in the private sector for huge sums of money after leaving public life. A society that wants good public officials should be willing to foot the bill. Wiping out corruption is achieved through competitive wages, not slogans.

Dole still searching for message against Clinton

By Alan Elsner

WASHINGTON — By sacrificing the Senate seat he loved, Republican presidential hopeful Bob Dole captured the attention of a sceptical American public, at least for a moment. The question is, how long can he hold it?

Mr. Dole's emotional speech Wednesday, in which he resigned from the Senate after 27 years, was undoubtedly one of the best of his long political career.

It fired up his dispirited supporters and injected hope into what had been an almost moribund presidential campaign.

"What Dole has done should silence the Republican hand-wringers and news pundits who were all but ready to award the election to Bill Clinton six

months before the ballots are cast," said David Keene, chairman of the American Conservative Union, who is a passionate Dole supporter.

But one speech does not a campaign make and reporters who followed Mr. Dole to Chicago for a rally Thursday were curious to see if he could sustain the new standard he had set.

Judging by his performance, the man from Kansas remains in search of a compelling and coherent message to use against Democratic President Clinton, who leads him in public opinion polls by 15 to 20 percentage points.

The main talking point in Chicago was the fact that Mr. Dole discarded his habitual dark suit and necktie for a pale blue blazer and an open collar,

As for the speech itself, he merely repeated some of his best lines from the previous day — but without the same emotional impact.

Morton Kondracke, executive editor of roll call, which covers Capitol Hill, was among many analysts to note that Mr. Dole's first strategy of challenging Mr. Clinton from his Senate majority leader post had not only failed but raised questions about his resolve and competence as a presidential contender.

"Now, of course, Dole has dealt with those qualms as decisively as he can. But his decision to hit the campaign trail full time begs the questions: what's he going to say out there?" Mr. Kondracke wrote.

Mr. Dole is working with aides on a new cam-

paign speech that both draws a contrast with Mr. Clinton and tries to portray the kind of future into which he wants to lead the country. But his Chicago speech suggested Mr. Dole is still psychologically wedded to the language and style of the Senate.

He talked at length about legislation passed by the Republican Congress and vetoed by Mr. Clinton, despite the fact that public opinion polls suggest the president enjoys considerable support for casting those vetoes.

"I don't think this puts a whole lot of electricity in his (Dole's) socket," said political analyst Kevin Phillips. "He can go out and give speeches, but the speeches he gave before were no good."

Mr. Dole did enjoy a quick blaze of publicity

for his dramatic decision. Almost 60 reporters accompanied him on his trip to Chicago — three times as many as had been covering recent campaign swings.

But attention is sure to ebb quickly as other events overshadow what since the end of March — when Dole locked up the nomination — has been a rather boring presidential race.

And because Dole has almost reached a federal campaign spending limit, he needs media attention all the more. He will not be able to buy television advertising time until the second half of August, after the Republican National Convention formally makes him the party's nominee and the major infusion of federal campaign subsidies occurs.

That leaves him few chances to win the kind of attention he got this week. Between now and September, there may only be two moments when the eyes of the nation will be on him.

One will be when he announces his vice presidential running mate, a decision aides say Mr. Dole has decided to postpone until just before the convention.

The second will be when he accepts the Republican presidential nomination at the convention itself.

That's not much ammunition against a president who will use the advantages of incumbency to travel the nation and dominate the political agenda. Meanwhile, Bob Dole, shorn of his Senate perch, will have to fight for equal time.

German team identifies, excavates first known Greco-Roman temple at Gadara (Umm Qais)

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

The splendid Greco-Roman city of Gadara (Umm Qais), with its full urban complement of theatres, colonnaded streets, baths, tombs, city walls and domestic quarters, perches dramatically on a promontory overlooking the north Jordan Valley and Lake Tiberias. Yet, this postcard-like antiquity has always suffered one glaring gap in its architectural remains: where were its temples?

In a Classical period city, temples were the most important symbols of political power and cultic authority, to the point that they were often portrayed on coins minted in a city. Scholars have often assumed that Gadara had at least three temples, but until now none has ever been identified or excavated.

This long running mystery has finally been partly

resolved, following excavations by a German team that identified the location and architectural remains of a temple that may be dedicated to the god Zeus Nikephoros (or Zeus-Jupiter, the same god worshipped at the Temple of Zeus in Roman Jerash).

The site of the temple, an artificial terrace in the northeast corner of the city, opposite the north theatre, has long been suspected by archaeologists as the location of a Roman temple, but it could not be excavated before last year due to its use until then by the Jordanian army. Excavations in 1995 and 1996 have revealed vaulted chambers, architectural fragments, and portions of a paved sacred way that convincingly confirm the spot as the site of a Classical period temple. Further evidence comes from coins and a statue found in the vicinity in previous years.

The project has been sponsored and funded by

the Cottbus Technical University and the German Archaeological Institute (Berlin); fieldwork has been carried out in cooperation with the German Protestant Institute for Archaeology in Amman, and with the permission of the Department of Antiquities, whose field representative in Umm Qais is Omar Rasheidat. The project director is Professor Adolf Hoffman of Cottbus Technical University; the acting director this year was Dr. Gunther Schauerer of the Berlin State Museums, and assistant director was Nadine Riedl of the German Protestant Institute in Amman.

Nothing remains of the upper portions of the temple, because the surface of the earth in this area has been repeatedly used for agricultural purposes for hundreds of years. The excavations uncovered remains from the lower portions of the temple (the sub-

structure). The most prominent remains are three vaulted rooms that were inter-connected by doorways, and that originally stood partly underground and partly above ground. At the back of the vaulted rooms is a staircase that once led down to the vaulted cellars of the temple.

Surrounding the entire structure are parts of the temple's enclosure wall, which has been excavated to a depth of two metres, but without touching bedrock in some places, Dr. Schauerer told the Jordan Times in a recent interview in Amman.

Older residents of Umm Qais recall using the vaulted rooms for storage of agricultural goods in the first half of this century, and local children still use the area today as an informal though active sports field.

The temple itself measured some 12 x 20 metres; this is not very large as ancient temples go, for this was not the main temple of

Gadara (coin evidence suggests that at least two other temples existed at Roman Gadara, dedicated respectively to Tyche and the Three Graces). The temple is thought to have been Doric in design, with four columns across its facade. It stood on a podium, which was a common feature of early Roman temples. The tetrastyle (four columns) configuration is assumed mainly on the basis of the relatively narrow size of the vaulted sub-structures.

Architectural fragments found at the site probably belong to the temple's frieze and the pediment above the columns, and to some of the columns as well. One column fragment was preserved because it remained in use as an animal drinking trough well into the medieval period. Many roof tiles were also found, along with fragments of limestone lion head fountains or drains that directed water down

from the roof.

The temple pre-dates the 2nd Century AD theatre facing it from across the colonnaded main street of Gadara, the decumanus. In front of the temple, and on a direct line from the temple entrance to the north theatre, the excavators found a well paved, nearly six-metre-wide road that is thought to be the Via Sacra, or the Sacred Way, which formed the ceremonial approach to the temple. This is the only place where pottery shards were found, because the foundation of the paved road was not disturbed by any activity in recent centuries.

The pottery, mostly from the 1st Century BC or even earlier, is an important indicator of the dating of the temple complex. Another dating element is the Doric style of the temple, a style that generally disappeared after the 1st Century BC. Such a date would rank these Late Hellenistic/Early Roman temple remains

among the earliest identified Classical period shrines in Jordan, alongside the remains of the Temple of Zeus in Jerash.

The deity of the temple is thought to be Zeus Nikephoros, based on the strength of two factors. The first is a less-than-life-size marble statuette of Zeus Nikephoros that was found at the site a few years ago (it is now in the local museum). The second is the depiction on Roman era coins from Gadara of a Zeus figure enthroned in a tetrastyle temple, matching both the marble statuette and the (presumably) tetrastyle temple remains found at Gadara.

There may have been an open air altar on the slightly higher ground to the north, where remains of some built structures are visible in the ground.

When the temple building stopped being used as a temple or was destroyed is not known. Almost certain-

ly, Dr. Schauerer said, it was no longer used as a temple after the Byzantine period edict of 396 AD, which banned all the former pagan temple cults. There is no pottery at the site dating from the 5th or 6th Centuries AD, which supports an abandonment at the end of the 4th century.

The temple area is now being used as a combination parking lot for buses and sports field for children. The Department of Antiquities, recognising the importance of protecting the few standing temple structures that have been excavated, has decided to move the parking lot to the south side of the ancient city remains. The German team and the department are jointly designing plans to restore and protect the temple site, within a larger project to improve tourism facilities in Umm Qais while also preserving the cultural and archaeological integrity of the entire site.



View of part of the excavated vaulted rooms of the temple sub-structure (Photos by Hans-Dieter Bienert)



A stretch of the paved Via Sacra (Sacred Way), leading to the temple remains in the background

King receives Saudi message

(Continued from page 1)

and Defence Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh, the King's advisor on tribal affairs Lieutenant-General Hmeidi Al Fayez and Saudi Ambassador to Jordan Abdullah Sudeiri, the agency added.

The Saudi message to King Hussein came amid reports of efforts to convene an Arab mini-summit including Saudi Arabia after the King, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat met in Cairo last week.

President Mubarak said after the meeting that the present situation in the Arab World was not conducive to convening a full summit of the 22 members of the Arab League, but that there were

chances for mini-summits bringing in some other Arab leaders into the grouping of the three leaders who met in Cairo.

The Egyptian president did not elaborate, but his comments indicated that Saudi Arabia could be one of those countries for an expanded mini-summit, which, according to experts in Arab affairs, would focus on ways and means to support the Palestinian position in the final status negotiations with Israel and to adopt collective action to interact with the progress achieved so far in the Middle East peace process.

Jordan has said that it would not assume a direct role in the final status negotiations but that it was ready to help with technical expertise outside the negotiating

room if asked to do so by the Palestinian side.

Another issue for the Arab leaders, as and when they meet, will be means to reinvigorate the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of negotiations with Israel.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has reassured his responsibilities as head of government after suffering a health ailment late last year. However, according to reports from the Gulf, Crown Prince Abdullah is shouldering a major part of the task.

King Hussein met with Prince Abdullah this year during his first official visit to Saudi Arabia during the 1990 Gulf crisis.

A Jordanian-Saudi ministerial committee overseeing broad economic cooperation is expected to hold a meeting in Amman in June, its first in six years. It is co-chaired by the ministers of trade of the two countries.

Israel accepts Lebanese role

(Continued from page 1)

ited States complained to Syria this week about channelling Iranian arms shipments to Hizbollah guerrillas.

"We're concerned, and we've told them," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

Intelligence sources verified the delivery, Mr. Burns said, declining to disclose the kind of weapons sent to the guerrillas who have fired missiles and mortars at Israeli soldiers deployed inside Lebanon's border and at Israeli settlements near the border.

Syria's participation in the monitoring negotiations could signal an interest in resuming peace talks with

Israel after Israel's elections at the end of the month.

"We do believe it is possible to make progress on the Israeli-Syrian track this year," Mr. Burns said.

Mr. Christopher arranged the cease-fire last month with the approval of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad. However, the agreement, which has not signed, is between Israel and Lebanon.

He told the Senate subcommittee he had "no illusions" about Syria, but thought also "there is a reasonable chance for peace between the two countries."

Senator Frank Lautenberg, a New Jersey Democrat, sharply criticised Damascus. "Syria has the capacity to

stop those attacks on Israel," he said.

The draft reached does have some unresolved points, but "I think the most difficult issues have been resolved and we can come to agreement fairly quickly."

"We're reasonably confident that this is going to be agreed to (but) it will take a couple of days," Mr. Burns said.

The State Department has released no details of the draft, worked out by U.S. special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross and Washington ambassadors of the four other countries.

Mr. Burns explained the U.S. reticence, saying: "We don't want to do anything that would harm our chances of getting final agreement from any one of these governments."

Hamas vows to continue attacks

(Continued from page 1)

suicide bombings earlier this year in Israel.

Mr. Ghosheh denied there is a split within Hamas, but he offered no explanation for the contradictory statements.

He has denied Israeli claims that Iran funds Hamas activities against the Jewish state.

"There are neither Islamic nor Arab countries which provide Hamas with financial aid," he said. "Those who support us are honourable Palestinian and Muslim people."

He declined to be more specific, but said Hamas' funds are a "trickle compared with the flood of money" given to Mr. Arafat by international donors to help build a Palestinian infrastructure.

Mr. Ghosheh declined to discuss anything pertaining to Hassan Salameh, a ranking figure in Hamas' military wing who was wounded and captured by Israeli soldiers Friday.

Mr. Salameh is a top figure in Hamas' military arm and is believed to have orchestrated three suicide bombings in Israel.

"I can't discuss anything related to Hassan Salameh because I don't have any information,"

Mr. Ghosheh said: "As politicians we are not aware of the happenings in the military wing," he said.

Mr. Ghosheh said that the "arrest or martyrdom of Salameh would not halt the resistance or the floods of jihad (holy war) seekers."

Demirel

(Continued from page 1)

assailant was angry over Turkey's military flight training deal with Israel.

In February, the two countries signed a military training agreement, which irked Arab countries and Iran as well as Turks who want this Muslim but officially secular country to move closer to the pro-Islamic orbit.

Anatolia reported that a plainclothes guard noticed the gunman pointing a gun at Mr. Demirel and grabbed the assailant's hand. Other police jumped on the assailant, Anatolia said.

The gun went off, injuring a Turkish journalist and a policeman, the agency said. Eyewitnesses said that the gun went off twice.

Bodyguards and police surrounded Mr. Demirel and hustled him off to his car. Mr. Demirel, 72, whose first of seven premierships began in

1965, looked calm, but his wife, Nazmiye Demirel, appeared panicked. The couple flew back to Ankara.

Shot in the leg was journalist Ihsan Yilmaz, of the Istanbul daily Milliyet, who told private TV Channel D that the assailant approached Mr. Demirel as the president was about to get into his car at the end of the ceremony and seemed as if he wanted to ask the president something.

Mr. Demirel, a conservative pragmatist whose post is mostly symbolic, has been on the sidelines of infighting between Turkey's two right-wing coalition parties which has brought the government close to collapse.

But he would have a say in choosing the next prime minister or setting up an interim administration were the coalition to fall.

Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz has urged his government ally Tansu Ciller to tell himself and Mr. Demirel

the whereabouts of \$6.5 million which she withdrew from a government slush fund for shadowy security operations.

Police kept journalists away from the Cankaya presidential palace in Ankara, where Mr. Demirel flew immediately after the shooting.

The portly Demirel, known as Baba (father) in the farmlands and small towns where his core support lies, is a survivor.

He has been prime minister seven times since he first came to power in the mid-1960s and has been toppled twice by the military.

The generals banned Mr. Demirel from politics for 10 years after a 1980 coup but he returned to power in 1987.

He became President in 1993 after the death of incumbent Turgut Ozal. No Turkish leader has ever been assassinated

Israel arrests wanted militant

(Continued from page 1)

ghold where 450 Jewish settlers live among 120,000 Palestinians.

Dozens of Israeli soldiers patrolled Hebron's downtown market area Saturday, apparently to prevent violent protests against Mr. Salameh's arrest. Troops stopped and searched many cars and Palestinians on foot.

Passengers were ordered to step out of a taxi as officers checked the trunk.

Two Norwegian observers, part of a 32-team deployed this week to help reduce friction in town, sat in a car and observed the searches, but did not interfere.

An army spokeswoman said Mr. Salameh had masterminded three suicide bombings in the Jewish state earlier this year that killed scores of people.

She said soldiers stopped Mr. Salameh in his car in Hebron. A second suspected

guerrilla travelling with him was also arrested.

"During the inspection one of the men (Salameh) tried to escape and at the same time pulled out a pistol."

He was shot and wounded but managed to escape and was discovered later at Alia Hospital in Hebron, the spokeswoman said.

Guns and grenades were discovered in the car, she said.

The arrests were a boost for Prime Minister Shimon Peres, fighting a tough election campaign against Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu who accused him of putting Israel's security at risk in peace deals with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Four suicide bombings by militants opposed to Israel-PLO peace moves killed 59 people in the Jewish state between Feb. 25 and March 4. The attacks nearly wiped out Mr. Peres' double-digit lead over Mr. Netanyahu in

polls.

Israeli security sources said the two men may have been on their way to carrying out an attack. They said the army had arrested at least four other suspected Hamas activists on Saturday.

Israel radio identified the second man in the car as Razik Al Rajoub, a relative of Jibril Al Rajoub, who heads the Palestinian Preventive Security Service in the West Bank.

"I want to be a martyr, not to be arrested by the Israelis," Wael Chiohki, a visitor at Alia Hospital, quoted Mr. Salameh as saying on his arrival.

Separately, Israeli military sources said that an Israeli border guard was slightly injured Friday evening by a grenade thrown by a Palestinian in the village of Abu Dis in the West Bank on the outskirts of Jerusalem.

Hamas has spearheaded opposition to the 1993 Israel-PLO accord that launched Palestinian self-rule in parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, calling the deal a

sellout.

A leaflet signed by Izzeddine Al Qassam, issued on Friday indicated the group was willing to halt attacks on Israel as part of efforts at reconciliation with the Palestinian Authority.

Mr. Arafat's forces rounded up hundreds of Hamas activists after the bombing spree and closed down Islamic institutions.

But in a statement issued on Saturday Hamas said that Friday's leaflet was a forgery and vowed to continue with the attacks against Israel.

Palestinian sources said that Mr. Salameh was involved in bombings. They said he underwent military training in Sudan last year before infiltrating back into the Gaza Strip.

Doctors operated on Mr. Salameh overnight while dozens of soldiers surrounded the hospital in Hebron and then transferred him to a hospital in Israel under heavy guard.

Hebron is the only Arab West Bank town with a Jewish settler population.

In February 1994, a Jewish settler massacred at least 30 Palestinians as they prayed at Hebron's Ibrahim mosque.

Israeli troops were to redeploy in parts of the city last March under a peace deal with the Palestinians but delayed the withdrawal after the spate of suicide attacks.

Mr. Salameh, a resident of Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, was trained in sabotage in Syria and Sudan and returned home about a year ago, Israeli Radio reported.

For the past few weeks Israeli forces knew he was in Hebron, and stepped up patrols and road blocks there.

The violent capture of Mr. Salameh raised some concern that Izzeddine Al Qassam would set off more bombs to avenge him.

Israeli security forces have issued repeated warnings that militants would try to set off bombings ahead of the May 29 elections.

Security sources said Saturday at least 20 militants are still at large, planning attacks, Israeli Radio reported.

Egypt to continue selling its debt

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt will continue selling off its \$32 billion foreign debt, said Economy Minister Nawal Al Tawfi, adding that the policy had helped increase Egyptian exports.

"Since the launch in 1989 of the sale of Egyptian foreign debt, Egypt has been able to settle \$3.2 billion of the debt," Ms. Tawfi said, quoted by the Arab economic daily Al Alam Al Youm Saturday.

She said the programme had "contributed greatly to the increase of Egyptian exports as well as drawing Arab and foreign capital to invest in Egypt."

Egypt is "prepared to satisfy the demands of parties which offer to buy up the debt on the condition they respect rules set by the Egyptian government", including the requirement that the debt be paid in Egyptian pounds, she said.

Under accords with the Paris Club, which groups lending nations, Egypt is allowed to sell up to 10 per cent of its private foreign debt and 100 per cent of its government debt, she said.

Both the World Bank and Egypt's central bank have put the country's foreign debt at \$32 billion. Al Alam Al Youm reported.

Study: Death rates go up when income inequality is greater

LONDON (AP) — A Harvard University study says that death rates go up when income inequality is greater and suggests the United States could substantially reduce its mortality rate by bringing its income gap down to the British level.

"Income inequality is a major public health problem," said Bruce Kennedy of the Harvard School of Public Health, and one of the authors of the study published in the British Journal of Medicine.

"Economic policies that only focus on growth without taking into account how new wealth is distributed are shortsighted and may lead to negative results," he told the Associated Press.

The study used the "Robin Hood index," which measures the share of total income that must be transferred from the rich to the less well off to reach an equitable distribution. It found mortality increases by 21 deaths per 100,000 for each percentage point higher in the index.

The study focused on low-income earners; people on welfare were not included in the study.

The most equitable state was New Hampshire, with an index of 27.13 per cent and the least equitable was Louisiana, with 34.05 per cent, there was a similar gap in mortality rates. Overall, southern states registered higher on the index, and had correspondingly higher mor-

tality rates. "If overall income inequality in the United States were reduced (from 30.22 per cent) to that of Great Britain, at 27 per cent, mortality would be reduced by 13 per cent," Mr. Kennedy said.

Researchers used 1990 census data and mortality data from the national Centre for Health Statistics.

They found that income inequality has a significant relationship with deaths from coronary heart disease, cancer and homicide as well as with treatable diseases like tuberculosis, pneumonia and hypertension.

Mr. Kennedy said the results show a possible causal relationship between a breakdown of social cohesion and increased levels of frustration and stress, which in turn could affect health.

"Societies that tolerate large income inequalities may also underinvest in education and health care for the less well-off," he said.

Uwe Reinhardt, a professor of public health at Princeton University, said the study statistically backed up what many experts had long realised.

"The widening of income distribution in America exacerbates the problem," he said in an interview. "In Louisiana, by the way, you have people living in Third World conditions. Eventually we will pay for this through the spread of contagious diseases."

EU sees growth return in '97, single currency on track

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Commission has said that meagre economic growth in Europe this year would improve and that a "significant number" of countries were still on track to adopt a single currency in 1999.

It also said France and Germany — the linchpins of monetary union — would get their deficits to or below the key figure of three per cent of gross domestic product in time to qualify.

In its spring economic outlook, the commission said growth in the 15-nation bloc this year would be just 1.5 per cent, but that it would climb back to 2.4 per cent in 1997.

"Signs are emerging that the decline in economic confidence may have come to a halt and may be picking up again in a number of countries," it said in a statement.

Slumping growth had thrown into question the ability of European Union (EU) countries to trim their deficits to three per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), one of the key fiscal tests for

adopting the Euro, as the currency is to be known.

Germany and France were widely seen as failing the test in 1997, but the commission's figures suggested otherwise.

France would have a deficit to GDP ratio of 3.0 per cent next year and Germany's would be 2.9 per cent, the commission said.

EU monetary affairs commissioner said that all the forecasts showed that economic and monetary union (EMU) was on track and that the timetable was "realistic."

"I am convinced that a significant number of member states will fill the necessary conditions to switch to the Euro on Jan. 1, 1999," he said.

Denmark, Ireland and Luxembourg were expected to achieve a qualifying deficit to GDP ratio this year. They would be joined by Germany, France, the Netherlands and Finland in 1997.

Six other countries — Austria, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, Portugal and Britain — would be close.

Denmark has opted out of joining a single currency and would need a referendum to reverse its decision. Britain has the option of participating.

Given the bloc's economic woes, however, some financial analysts had already criticised the figures for France and Germany, which were leaked earlier to a German newspaper.

"Neither of these forecasts looks at all realistic, and look designed most of all to ward off any fears that EMU may be delayed," Chase Investment Bank said in its daily market brief.

The commission said that for 1997 it had included countries' latest budget plans, including Germany's 50 billion mark (\$30 billion) savings plan which has yet to be approved by the parliament.

Many analysts believe there is a political will in the EU to adopt a single currency and that it will happen regardless of strict adherence to the EMU criteria.

"The decision has already been taken," Eric Chaney,

senior economist at Morgan Stanley in Paris, told Reuters financial television.

At a news conference in Brussels earlier, however, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl said the criteria should not be touched.

"I am strictly against changing the convergence criteria," he said. "If we now speak about lowering our objectives we will not be doing ourselves any favours."

The commission predicted German growth would rise to 1.8 per cent in 1997 from an anaemic 0.5 per cent this year.

In other economic indicators, the commission said inflation was under control in most EU countries and should be at about 2.5 per cent on average next year.

Unemployment remains a big problem, however. The jobless rate for the bloc as a whole next year was seen dropping to just 10.8 per cent from this year's 10.9 per cent.

It would be worst in Spain at 22.1 per cent best in Luxembourg at 2.9 per cent.

Japan imports more oil from Arab states

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Japan imported more oil from Arab countries in 1995, confirming projections about its growing reliance on the Middle East at the expense of other crude suppliers, bank figures have showed.

Its crude oil imports from the Arab World, mostly from the Gulf, increased by around two per cent to 3.2 million barrels per day (bpd) compared to 1994, the Bahrain-based Arab Banking Corporation (ABC) said.

Imports from other sources declined by seven per cent to 1.4 million bpd due to lower supplies from Iran and Indonesia. ABC said in its quarterly bulletin.

"As a result, the Arab share of the total Japanese oil imports rose to around 70 per cent in 1995 from 65 per cent in 1994," it said.

The United Arab Emirates

(UAE), which has remained Japan's main oil partner over the past decade, supplied Tokyo with around 26 per cent of its total crude imports.

Saudi Arabia's share stood at nearly 20 per cent and Oman and Qatar at around six per cent, the report showed.

Another 10 per cent came from Kuwait and the Neutral Zone, a small oil-rich strip shared equally by the emirate and Saudi Arabia. The remaining shipments were supplied by Egypt and Yemen.

Japan's oil imports from the Middle East have steadily

grown over the past 15 years due to an increase in its consumption and in Arab output.

Japanese officials have forecast a steady increase in supplies from the Middle East as it controls nearly 60 per cent of the world's proven crude reserves and produces more than a quarter of the global supplies.

The level is set to surge as most Gulf nations are expanding their production capacities.

ABC, the biggest financial institution in the region, said Arab oil production stayed almost

unchanged at around 18.2 million bpd in 1995, accounting for nearly 27 per cent of the world's total crude output.

But it added that revenues were higher as the price of OPEC's basket of seven crudes increased to an average \$16.86 in 1995 from \$15.3 in 1994.

The report gave no figures on 1995 revenues, but they were estimated at nearly \$86.8 billion in 1994.

France to push development aid at G-7 summit

PARIS (R) — France, acting on behalf of the developing world at next month's G-7 summit, will call on industrialised nations to reverse the current decline in aid.

Cooperation Minister Jacques Godfrain has said. Development will be a major issue at the summit of the world's seven most industrialised countries from June 27 to 29 in Lyon, Mr. Godfrain told the newspaper Le Monde in an interview.

"It will be largely devoted to development, and developing countries will most certainly ask France to speak on their behalf," he said.

"France must encourage industrialised powers to increase aid, and it is our duty to be the champion of developing countries' demands," he said.

President Jacques Chirac told the British parliament during a state visit to London he would make development aid a major issue at the summit, saying poor countries pursuing democracy and courageous economic re-

forms deserved support.

Mr. Godfrain said he hoped the G-7 summit would stop the decline in public development aid and open the way for growth in private sector aid to countries ensuring law and order and an independent justice.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, MAY 19, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You get your finest ideas in the morning today, and then you can set a fine course to make them a reality. Be affectionate with your mate this evening and you can spend some special private moments in each others company.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Discuss with your family how to make the days ahead brighter for all and then pool your resources and energies toward such an end. Later this evening you should meet with fellow associates and discuss some new project.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) In the morning today, you gain inspiration in the outside world, and later this evening you can make family life more harmonious and happy by becoming involved in some activities which your whole family will enjoy participating in.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You understand how to gain more abundance today and then talk your plans over with experts at your leisure who can provide you with some excellent suggestions. This evening is good for relaxing with your loved ones.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Study how best to make your personal life more as you want to be today, and then labour to make it happen and by doing so you can be quite successful. Later this evening will be very productive so concentrate upon your duties.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Talk to your friends and see how they can assist you today in gaining your cherished aims. Use tact in reaching your goals at this time. Later this evening you should spend some time on some important career activities.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) See one who has great vision and develop your own as well today, and then raise the level of a friend's ego by pursuing some career activities which will be quite beneficial. Tonight spend a quiet time at home.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Analyse your activities for the day today and know if they coincide with your personal desires. Treat others kindly at this time and they will acknowledge your generosity in ways which you will not be able to count.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You may get fine ideas for the day today and you should discuss them with a bigwig who can give you backing, so that your project will get the proper send off. Later tonight spend some time with close friends.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Your intuition is fine for making a better impression on others today, so use it to meet interesting and fascinating personalities. This evening can be special if you plan some romantic activities with your mate at some quiet place.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can learn from a wise person today how to make your own life more abundant, and put such ideas into effect. Later tonight it is important for you to proceed with any career activities which will help in your progress.

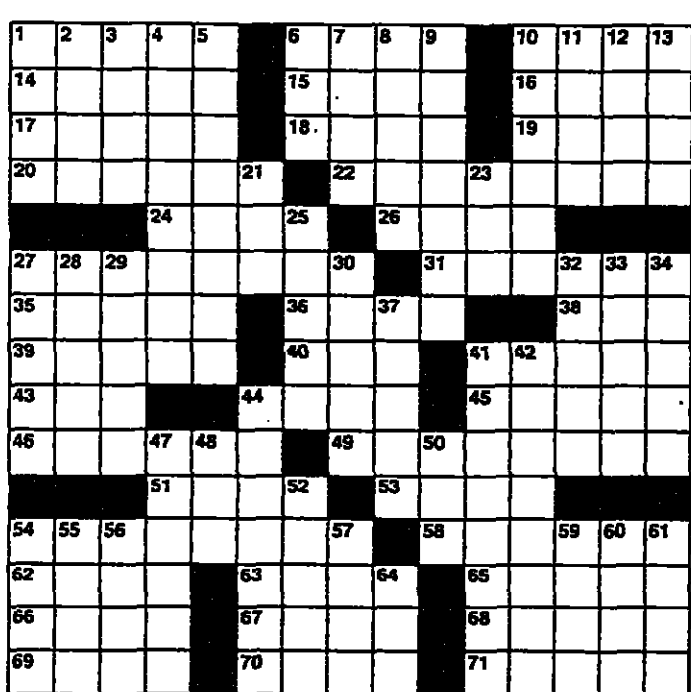
PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Adding more charm and beauty to your environment is wise today, however, first get ideas from experts along such lines. Later this evening you should plan some activities which your whole family can participate in for fun.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

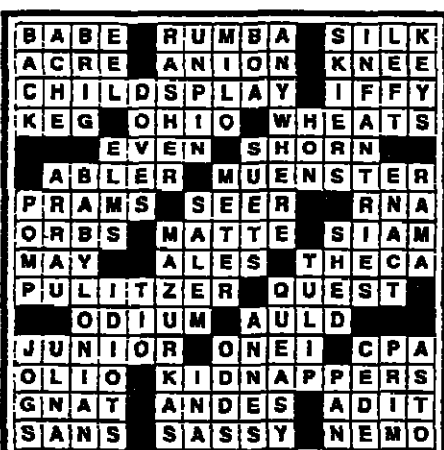
THE Daily Crossword by Vivian O. Collins

ACROSS

- 1 Consecrated
- 6 Country letters, once
- 10 Poet Teasdale
- 14 Revolving part
- 15 Baseball's Rose
- 16 Moran or Gray
- 17 Fragrance
- 18 Pass through
- 19 Oriole's hangout
- 20 Swiss city
- 22 Memento
- 24 Dissolve
- 26 Whistle
- 27 Patisserie item
- 31 Boarder
- 35 Worship
- 36 Pinches
- 38 Marital promise
- 39 Superior
- 40 Freudian term
- 41 River to the Caspian
- 43 Danson or Koppel
- 44 Addict
- 45 Church dignitary
- 46 TX city
- 49 Used tires
- 51 Criticize in harsh language
- 53 Island of the Netherlands
- 54 Gave in
- 58 Spotted horses
- 62 Prolific auth.
- 63 "Terrible" leader
- 65 Sun-dried brick
- 66 Outer covering
- 67 Zlich
- 68 Lamp denizen
- 69 Nervous
- 70 Lodge members
- 71 Indians



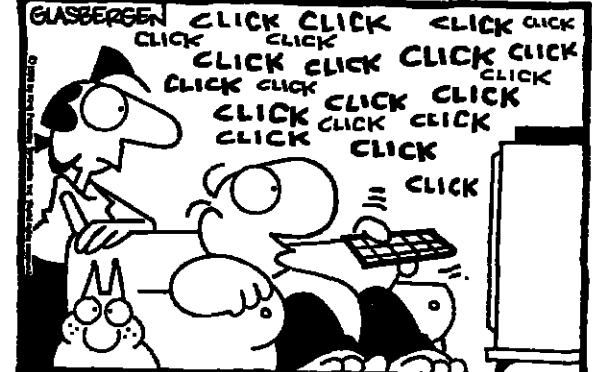
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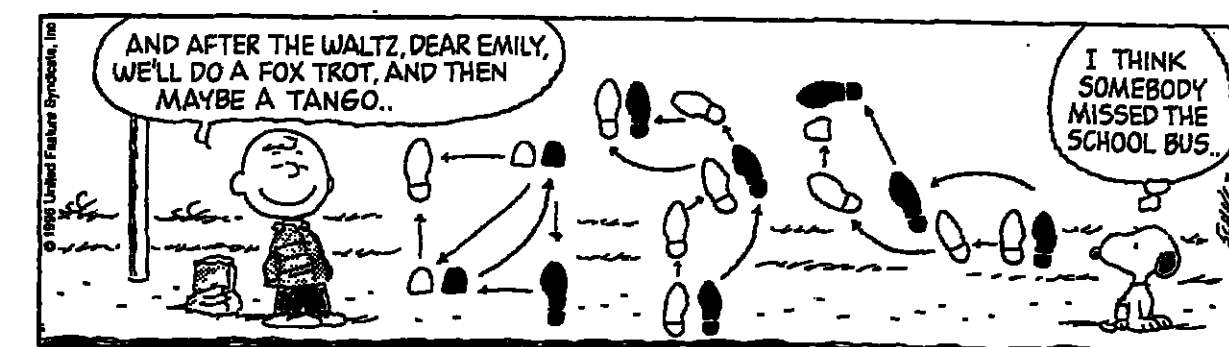
DOWN

- 1 Boast
- 2 Knowledge handed down
- 3 Jacket or collar
- 4 Additional ones
- 5 Tourist
- 6 Increases
- 7 Hide's partner
- 8 Precipitous
- 9 Rescinds
- 10 Felt
- 11 Length times width
- 12 Peril
- 13 A.M. word
- 21 Fermented beverage
- 23 Expert
- 25 Shades
- 27 Commercial pact letters
- 28 Farewell
- 29 Fishing holes
- 30 River to the Gulf of Guinea
- 32 Entertainer Radner
- 33 Bordered
- 34 Grows
- 37 Studies carefully
- 41 Wordiness
- 42 Poisonous shrub
- 44 Divide into parts
- 47 Fashionable
- 48 Fleming or Hunter
- 50 Draw from
- 52 Sensible
- 54 Occurring infrequently
- 55 OK city
- 56 Protracted
- 57 Stygian
- 59 Singer Tennille
- 60 Theater award
- 61 Perceives
- 64 Integers: abbr.

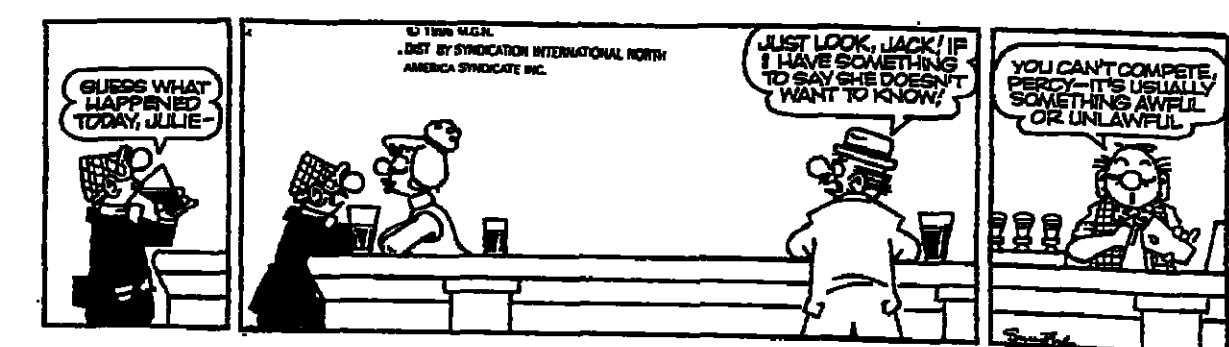
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



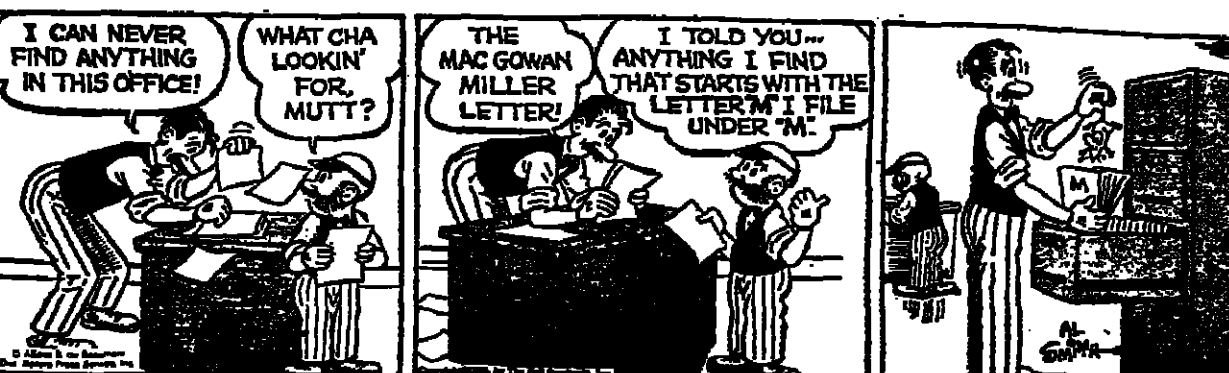
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n Jeff



Nervous Iraqi traders await word on U.N. oil deal

BAGHDAD (R) — Business was sluggish in Baghdad's bazaar Saturday as both shoppers and traders waited anxiously for the result of Iraq-U.N. talks on partial oil sales, expected at any time.

Traders said the fluctuations in the value of the Iraqi dinar since the talks started on Feb. 6 have made them wary of concluding deals, the price of which could either skyrocket or slump depending on the outcome of the talks in New York.

Several traders put up their shutters saying they would only resume business when the talks end.

Shoppers said they did not know what to do with their dinars, the value of which could soar if a deal is concluded or plunge if the talks reach deadlock again.

Iraq, hard-hit by U.N. sanctions imposed after its

1990 invasion of Kuwait, is negotiating partial oil sales worth \$2 billion over six months to enable it to buy food, medical and other urgent humanitarian needs.

In Jamila, Iraq's foodstuff shopping centre, buying and selling was confined to essentials like flour, eggs, sugar, and rice.

A few carried baskets full of goods. They were the pessimists who said they were tired of the protracted talks and decided to buy regardless.

A kilogramme of sugar was sold for 700 dinars in Jamila down from 1600 prior to the talks starting, but still a lot for Iraqis earning an average 3500 dinars a month.

"There are so many women shoppers these days. They just ask about prices which for many are still very expensive despite the latest

falls," said a trader.

Iraqi and U.N. negotiators reached a draft accord in New York Wednesday and said they were waiting for approval from Iraqi leaders.

"It is hard to do business these days amid the instability of a currency whose constant changing has become our worst headache," said another trader.

Money changing was almost stagnant in Baghdad. Exchange houses, legally free to deal hard cash, gave different rates for the U.S. dollar on Saturday. To lure customers a number of money changers offered more than 800 dinars for the dollar which traders viewed as a bargain.

Earlier in the negotiations, positive remarks from either U.N. or Baghdad, would firm the dinar's value. At times it

surged to about 500 to the dollar.

The uncertainty about the talks has affected most businesses in Baghdad. Car repairers, mechanics, spare part traders and factory owners, who made millions prior to the talks, complain of lack of business.

"Everybody hopes oil will flow, trade will mushroom again and people will be able to buy," said one trader who said he was facing his first bad times under the U.N. embargo.

The current state of economic stagnation has also led to complaints of unemployment for the first time in Iraq since sanctions were imposed.

"Our oil revenues could, work miracles but we first need to be sure that the revenues are sure to come," added the trader.

Gold demand said falling seven per cent

LONDON (R) — High gold prices and tough economic conditions in several major consuming countries combined to reduce first quarter world gold demand by seven per cent compared with the same period in 1995, the World Gold Council (WGC) said on Wednesday.

According to its gold demand trends quarterly report, aggregate demand totalled 636 tonnes in countries monitored which account for about 80 per cent of world gold demand.

"We always expected the first quarter to be below the exceptional demand of a year ago. The outcome is better than we expected," said Helen Junz, director of the WGC's economic service.

"It confirms the view that there continues to be very strong underlying demand," Ms. Junz said.

A 53 per cent downturn in investment buying in the developed markets compared with the 1995 period led the downturn.

Gold consumption noticeably slowed when the price streaked to its highest level in six years at over \$415 per ounce in early February but has begun to pick up since.

Ms. Junz said, "latest market reports indicate that based on the resumption of normal buying behavior, demand has adjusted to about \$10 above the lower band of prices (seen at the end of last year) to around \$390 per ounce since late last year."

Ms. Junz added, "at this level and with continued income growth in most high gold-affinity countries, the outlook for 1996 is for demand consolidation at high levels, although perhaps not quite equalling the 1995 record."

Banks in UAE report record profits

ABU DHABI (AFP) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) national banks made record profits in 1995 because of a business upturn in the region and expansion in their services, their balance sheets have showed.

Net profits by the 17 of the Gulf country's 19 national banks jumped by 31.5 per cent to 2.1 billion dirhams (\$572 million) in 1995, from 1.7 billion dirhams (\$463 million) in 1994.

The national banks made substantial achievements in 1995.

Their performance has been the best since the establishment of the banking system in the UAE, said Zuhair Kaswani, a leading UAE economist and

stockbroker.

Bankers attributed the high profits to an economic upswing in the UAE and other Gulf states due to higher oil prices, introduction of new banking services, and a surge in personal loans.

Another factor was that banks have overcome bad debt problems by setting aside large funds from their profits.

According to the bankers, most of the business boom was in the construction and trade sectors, the biggest in the region after the oil sector.

Mr. Kaswani, citing the banks' balance sheets, said credits by the 17 banks increased by 11.8 per cent to 57.3 billion dirhams (\$15.6 billion) by the end of 1995.

from 51.7 billion dirhams (\$14 billion) by the end of 1994.

Assets totalled 111.4 billion dirhams (\$30.3 billion) in 1995, compared with around 105.5 billion dirhams (\$28.7 billion) in 1994.

Shareholders equity grew by 9.3 per cent to 14.7 billion dirhams (\$4 billion) and deposits by 4.3 per cent to 80.3 billion dirhams (\$21.8 billion).

The capital stood at 6.6 billion dirhams (\$1.79 billion) and dividends at 1.02 billion dirhams (\$277 million).

Bankers said the rise in the shareholders equity was because many banks had boosted their capital and reserves in line with central

bank instructions to ensure all banks meet international adequacy standards.

A breakdown showed the government-controlled National Bank of Dubai made the highest profits in 1995, standing at 352 million dirhams (\$95.9 million).

The National Bank of Abu Dhabi, also state-run, had the biggest assets, at around 23.4 billion dirhams (\$6.37 billion).

The report did not cover the Gulf First Bank, which has yet to issue its 1995 balance sheet.

The other bank is the Union National Bank, which has not released results for the past five years due to its link to the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

The world's largest gold consumer, India, used 118.8 tonnes, five per cent less than in the 1995 quarter following a 20 per cent increase in the rupee gold price.

U.S. Jewellery demand was up for the 17th consecutive quarter with a six per cent rise to 74.4 tonnes.

Saudi Arabia/UAE demand rose five per cent to a record first quarter total of 56.6 tonnes, aided by a rising oil price and strong demand during a Dubai promotional festival.

But Chinese demand fell 13 per cent to 54.2 tonnes, reflecting government policy to control inflation and a drop off in imported jewellery when the world gold price rose above the Chinese domestic price.

The WGC is a Geneva-based non-profit making promotional organisation of world gold producers.

DAILY BUSINESS

A review of news from the Arabic press

Jordan Kuwait Bank writes off JD 5.07 million of bad debts

★ AMONG A NUMBER of accomplishments achieved by the Jordan Kuwait Bank last year were boosting after tax profits by JD 515,000 to JD 1.4 million, raising total deposits by JD 21.9 million to JD 215.3 million and increasing shareholders' equity from JD 18.54 million to JD 19.89 million. Other results were bringing up total assets to JD 248.5 million up from JD 220 million in 1994, and raising the volume of credit facilities by 13 per cent to JD 117.1 million. Board Chairman Sufian Sartawi told the general assembly that the bank earned more than JD 20 million in interest and commission compared to JD 16.8 million in 1994. With interest and commission paid amounting to JD 11 million, the bank's net operational income was about JD 8.9 million. Noting that the bank's portfolio of shares and stocks for investment and trading amounted to JD 8.59 million, Mr. Sartawi said that the bank generated JD 512,000 (JD 302,500 in 1994) from trading operations and JD 58,000 from investment returns.

The chairman revealed that the bank had decided to write off JD 5.07 million of bad debts but he assured the shareholders that despite this move the bank would keep pursuing for the repayment of these debts and that a special unit for this purpose had been set up. Another step highlighted in the annual report was the opening of a branch in Nablus which is considered as the first expansion outside Jordan.

Winding up the general assembly meeting, the shareholders approved rolling over the profit for 1996 to consolidate the bank's financial position and to prepare for raising the capital to JD 20 million in 1997 by capitalising retained earnings and reserves and floating new shares (Al Aswaq + Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

Third party car insurance weighs negatively on 1995 financial results of General Arabia Insurance Company

★ THE GENERAL assembly of the General Arabia Insurance Company approved in an extraordinary session a recommendation from the board of directors to increase the company's capital by JD 800,000 to JD 2 million and authorised the board to take the necessary measures towards this end. The capital increase will be covered from reserves and retained earnings as well as from private subscription. During the ordinary session, the general assembly approved rolling over the profit and retaining it for 1996 after deducting a 10 per cent portion to be added to the voluntary reserve account. The company managed to boost its annual production growth by 17.2 per cent last year to JD 2.87 million whereas paid claims increased by 4.02 per cent to JD 1.52 million. The board said the obligatory third party car insurance sector had weighed negatively on the company's financial results by registering a JD 140,542 loss. This figure caused the total net profit of all the insurance departments to fall by 80.18 per cent to a mere JD 24,260. According to the company's annual report, other income earned last year amounted to JD 24,277 per cent drop from the JD 197,242 other income earned in 1994. The company had a portfolio of shares and stocks totalling JD 2.7 million at the end of 1995 compared to JD 2.48 million in 1994. Total assets stood at JD 4.23 million while shareholders' equity totalled JD 1.69 million (Al Aswaq + Al Dustour).

Wall Street tackles layoffs and low salaries

NEW YORK (AFP) — Political pressure on industry to end a pattern of massive layoffs may be taking effect — Wall Street has begun to criticise companies' efforts to be meaner and leaner.

The heaviest hitter to weigh in so far is Stephen Roach, the influential chief economist of capitalist bastion Morgan Stanley, who faxed a statement to clients backing away from calls to cut personnel fat and hold down salaries.

"Corporate America has done a terrific job in boosting the efficiency under which it operates by slashing workers, closing

plants and squeezing wages," he wrote.

"But I have come reluctantly to the conclusion that it is basically all that has been at work," he added. "If all you are doing is hollowing out companies and squeezing out workers, ultimately you are going to hit a big wall."

He recommended raising salaries to keep pace with productivity gains. Without that, he predicted a "worker backlash" that would lead to government intervention in the economy.

President Bill Clinton's administration, whose point man on the workforce is Labour Secretary Robert

Reich, had been making the same recommendation for months.

"I am very encouraged by what I am hearing Mr. Roach and other analysts say," he said. "If Wall Street begins to tell their clients that they have got to take a look at hollowing out and downsizing, that can have an enormous influence."

Mr. Roach said that he had changed his mind after seeing the growing disparity between rises in productivity and profits and stagnation in wages.

"Workers cannot be underpaid forever," he said.

When U.S. companies were confronted with stiff

Japanese competition and the high dollar in the 1980s, it was natural for companies to target their biggest expense: Workers' salaries.

"We have probably gone too far, that has always been the American way and now we are going to begin the long arduous process of swinging back the other way with the pendulum going back from capital to labour," he said.

Companies that persist in enriching themselves while squeezing labour are practicing "tactics that in the end can lead to industrial extinction," he said.

But Mr. Roach's ideas have not found wide support

on Wall Street. Rosanne Cahn, chief economist at First Boston, said that there were good reasons to invest in capital rather than people.

"Companies substitute capital for labour because capital is cheap and labour is expensive," she said. "Labour is expensive because of something which is not under its control, that is health costs."

She also argued that no company would want to be the first to raise salaries. And she doubted that it would be forced upon them, given the weak labour unions in the United States and Republicans dominating Congress, who have blocked

a bill raising the minimum wage.

Others argued that the salaries were not the issue as much as an effort by companies to generate loyalty among their employees.

Frederick Reichheld, a consultant with the firm Bain and Co., the question of loyalty is critical since American companies today lose half their workers every four years.

"Pay cuts and price increases can boost earnings, but they have a negative effect on employee and customer loyalty and so shorten the duration and worth of those assets," he said.

Financial Markets			
Jordan Times			
In co-operation with			
Cairo Amman Bank			
U.S. Dollar in International Markets			
Currency	New York Closing Rate 15/5/96	Tokyo Closing Rate 16/5/96	
Sterling Pound	1.5136	1.5123**	
Deutsche Mark	1.5330	1.5327	
Swiss Franc	1.5351	1.5362**	
French Franc	5.1915	5.1950**	
Japanese Yen	106.92	106.48	
European Currency Unit	1.5260	1.5258**	
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin			
Date: 16/5/1996			
Currency	Bid	Offer	
U.S. Dollar	0.7060	0.7100	
Sterling Pound	1.0701	1.0755	
Deutsche Mark	0.3613	0.3636	
Swiss Franc	0.5603	0.5671	
French Franc	0.1367	0.1369	
Japanese Yen	0.00628	0.00661	
Dutch Guilder	0.0125	0.0126	
Swedish Krona	0.0455	0.0457	
Italian Lira	0.0455	0.0457	
Belgian Franc	0.0455	0.0457	
Other Currencies			
Date: 16/5/1996			
Currency	Bid	Offer	
Bahraini Dinar	1.8650	1.8780	
Lebanese Lira	0.045575	0.045075	
Saudi Riyal	0.1870	0.1895	
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3310	2.3670	
Omani Riyal	0.1932	0.1945	
Egyptian Pound	0.0000	0.0100	
Omani Riyal	1.3330	1.0810	
UAE Dirham	0.1900	0.1933	
Greek Drachma	0.0735	0.0775	
Cypriot Pound	1.4515	1.5050	

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Italian Open

Edberg goes out in emotional style

ROME (AP) — Stefan Edberg bowed and waved to all corners of the Foro Italico Stadium. The 10,200 spectators stood for several minutes in a rousing ovation. Tears streamed down the faces of many fans.

Edberg, playing his 14th and final year on the tour, received an emotional farewell after losing 6-3, 6-3 to Richard Krajicek in the Italian Open quarterfinals Friday.

"In a foreign country to have an ovation like that was quite amazing," Edberg said. "I expected a nice round of applause, but this was really special."

Even during the match, the crowd repeatedly broke into rhythmic clapping and chants of "Stefan! Stefan!"

"Sometimes, I had goosebumps out there," said Edberg, playing for only the third time in Rome. "It was great leaving the court. Even if I lost the match, it didn't matter today."

Krajicek said he felt lonely on the center court.

"My girlfriend and another friend were supporting me," the Dutchman said. "It was like three against 12,000."

In a night match, top-seeded defending champion Thomas Muster powered into the semifinals with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over No. 7 Marcelo Rios of Chile. Muster needed just over an hour to defeat a player considered one of the rising stars in tennis.

In other quarterfinal matches, sixth-seeded Wayne Ferreira beat No. 14 Andrei Medvedev, 6-4, 6-4, and No. 11 Alberto Costa crushed Italy's Andrea Gaudenzi, 6-2.



The Ukraine's Andrei Medvedev reacts by hitting his forehead with his racket after losing a point during the Italian Open tennis quarter-final tournament against South Africa's Wayne Ferreira May 17 (Reuters photo)

6-1.

In the semifinals, Muster will face Costa — one of only three players to beat him on clay in the last two years — and Ferreira will meet Krajicek.

The Edberg-Krajicek match featured the unusual

sight of two men playing classic serve-and-volley tennis on clay. It also included the second-fastest serve ever recorded on the ATP Tour.

In the eighth game of the second set, Krajicek cracked a first serve timed at 220 kph — just a shade below the

220.4 kph (137 mph) delivery by Britain's Greg Rusedski at San Jose last year. But Krajicek's serve was the fastest of 1996, topping the 217 kph (13.9 mph) by Rusedski at the Australian Open.

Edberg managed to get the serve back in play but lost the point. After seeing the speed displayed on the court-side monitor, Edberg flexed his bicep to the fans.

"I didn't even look (at the speed clock) because I didn't think it was that fast," Krajicek said. "I won the point, that's the most important thing. It would be terrible to hit to serve like that and lose the point."

But Krajicek had more than a big serve going this day. He played one of his best matches ever on clay, ripping ground strokes and passing shots that kept Edberg in check.

"He played out of his mind," Edberg said. "The way he played today, he can beat anybody on clay. He did everything really well, when he needed to find a line, he did."

Krajicek also showed poise in dealing with the pro-Edberg crowd. The fans booed and shouted "scemo" — idiot — when Krajicek argued a line call in the first game of the second set and received a time violation warning.

The outpouring of support for Edberg contrasted with the way the crowd turned against Gaudenzi, who was trying to become the first Italian to reach the semifinals in 18 years. Gaudenzi was jeered in his lackluster performance against Costa.

Wimbledon to have own music

LONDON (R) — The All-England Lawn Tennis Club, where Wimbledon is played, will have its own theme tune for the first time this year.

The club commissioned the music, entitled "Purple and Green," the official Wimbledon colours as worn by ball-boys and ballgirls and incorporated into souvenirs like towels and T-shirts.

A second, vocal, version is based on Rudyard Kipling's poem "If," which appears over the entrance used by players as they walk onto centre court.

Chris Gorrage, chief executive of the All England Club, said: "It has been the club's intention for some time to commission a suitable piece of music to capture the essence of Wimbledon."

"We hope 'Purple and Green' will soon become synonymous with the championships in the minds of audiences around the world."

'Robson taking charge at Barcelona'

LISBON (R) — Former England manager Bobby Robson signed a two-year contract on Friday to replace Johan Cruyff as coach of Spanish club Barcelona, a Portuguese radio station reported.

JSF radio said that Robson, who has just led Portuguese side Porto to their second successive league championship, flew on Friday to Madrid where the deal was agreed. Officials at Porto could not be immediately contacted to comment on the signing which had been widely predicted by Spanish and Portuguese media. There was no immediate comment from Barcelona either.

Robson had reportedly been offered a contract worth 20 million pesetas (\$160,000) a month to bring success back to the hugely ambitious Catalan club which has won nothing in the past two years.

The 63-year-old coach, who underwent surgery last year to remove a tumour from his jaw, has trained three clubs since giving up the English manager's job in 1990 after taking the team to the semifinals of the World Cup.

He won two league championships with Dutch club PSV Eindhoven before going to Lisbon's sporting in 1992. He was fired, for the first time in his long football career, some 18 months later and switched to Porto.

Cruyff's eight years at Barcelona, one of Europe's wealthiest clubs, have been amongst the most successful in its history.

They won the European Cup for the first time in 1992 and were Spanish League cham-

pions for four successive seasons from 1991 to 1994.

But after two barren seasons there had been calls for the outspoken Dutchman, whose relations with club chairman Jose Luis Nunez have long been tense, to be replaced.

The Spanish club had only recently announced that despite the disappointments of the past two seasons, the former Dutch World Cup star would be staying for another year.

But Spanish media were unanimous that Cruyff had triggered his dismissal by his failing to control his criticisms of Barcelona management despite reaching a verbal agreement to limit his comments at the end of April.

Spanish papers said the Dutchman's son Jordi, a striker who recently won his first cap for the Netherlands, would probably leave with him.

Robson, who was manager of England from 1982 to 1990, had one year of his contract with Porto still to run.

The Spanish sports daily Marca had carried an interview with Robson on Friday in which the Englishman described Barcelona as "the best club in the world."

Speaking on Thursday he said he thought everything would be decided within 24 hours. "My intention was to stay here (at Porto)... but things may have changed," Robson said then.

RACJ wraps up Jordan Rally with prize-giving ceremony

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Following arduous preparation by all concerned, the 860-kilometre-long Jordan International Rally is over and organisers, the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ), capped the event with the prize-giving ceremony Saturday evening.

Only 12 out of 27 starters finished the 14-stage two-day rally which forms the second round of the Middle East Championship.

Seven-time Middle East Rally champion Mohammad Bin Sulayyem of the United Arab Emirates received the first place trophy after clinching his sixth Jordan Rally title. Last year's winner Abdullah Bakhshab of Saudi Arabia took second place while Andreas Tsouloftas of Cyprus finished third.

The best Jordanian result was Jordan's Ma'rouf Abu Samra who came in fourth followed by Australia's Ron Cremen. Charris Komodromos of Cyprus, Salem Bin Sha'ban of the UAE, Menelaos Melissas of Cyprus, Ben Coles of Great Britain, and Jordanians Ibrahim Ata Ali, Fayek Sayegh and Tamer Taba'a.

Eighteen participants had finished the first leg of the event on Thursday, but as the second day of the rally got underway the tough and long special stages took their toll. Most of Jordan's top competitors were out early in the rally. Last year's fourth place finisher Jordan's Bashar Bustami was out on the first day and early on the second day His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Bin Al



Mohammad Bin Sulayyem.

Hussein, who was fourth after the first leg, was also out. He was followed by two Jordanian hopefuls 1995 Drivers Open champion Ahmad Al Daoud and brother Mohammad — both in new

Ford Escort Cosworths. But nevertheless, the rally was appreciated by participants for its trouble-free run, a prominent fact that enabled everyone to enjoy the competition.

Final results	
* Group A	Andreas Tsouloftas
Mohammad Bin Sulayyem	* Class 7
Abdullah Bakhshab	Charris Komodromos
Andreas Tsouloftas	* Class 6
* Group N	Ben Coles
Ma'rouf Abu Samra	Ibrahim Ata Ali
Ron Cremen	Tamer Taba'a
Salem Bin Sha'ban	* Class 4
* Class 8	Ma'rouf Abu Samra
Mohammad Bin Sulayyem	Ron Cremen
Abdullah Bakhshab	Salem Bin Sha'ban
	* Class 2
	Fayek Sayegh

Morcelli out for records

ATLANTA (R) — Nouredine Morcelli won't be satisfied this summer with merely winning the Olympic 1,500-metre gold medal that eluded him four years ago in Barcelona.

The Algerian world champion wants to smash his world records in both the 1,500 metres and the mile in European races after the games. "I think I can run about 3:25 in the 1,500 and 3:42 or 3:43 in the mile," the soft-spoken Algerian said as he prepared for the Grand Prix meeting in the Altanta Olympic Stadium.

He would like to knock about two seconds off his 1995 1,500-metre world record of 3:27.37 with a strong run in Monte Carlo on August 10, then wipe out his 1993 world mile record of 3:44.39 four days later in Zurich.

"I think I can do that," said Morcelli. "I have learned from my mistakes (in Barcelona)."

Indy driver killed in crash

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — American driver Scott Brayton, the Indy 500 pole-sitter, died Friday after crashing during practice for the May 26 race.

Brayton, 37, died about a half-hour after the accident at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, track spokesman Bob Walters said.

He was the 40th Indy 500 driver to die during practice, qualifications or the race, and the first since Jovy Marcelo was killed during practice in 1992. In all, 66 people — drivers, mechanics, spectators and a bystander — have died in accidents at the track.

Brayton, the most experienced Indy 500 driver in this year's field, was knocked unconscious and rushed to a hospital after crashing on Turn 2.

Dr Henry Bock, the medical director at the track, came out to the crash

scene and accompanied Brayton to Methodist Hospital. Track officials said Brayton was unconscious when he was placed on a stretcher and taken away in an ambulance.

He was pronounced dead 33 minutes later, Walters said.

"His death was due to injuries sustained in an accident," Walters said at a news conference at the speedway. "The speedway delayed the announcement of Scott's death until his family members could be notified."

Brayton's car did a half-spin and travelled 420 feet (126 metres) before it smashed into the wall. The car continued sliding along the wall for 360 feet (108 metres) with parts flying off. It then did a quarter-spin and travelled another 600 feet (180 metres) before coming to a stop in the

back straightaway.

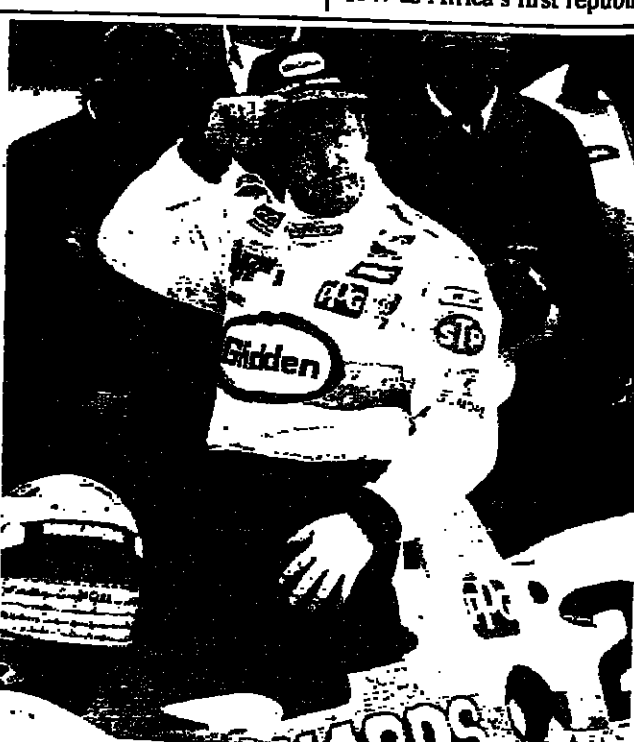
The right rear end and entire left side of the car were extensively damaged.

The crash was the third of the month at the speedway. Johnny Parsons and rookie Scott Harrington walked away from earlier crashes.

Brayton, from Coldwater, Michigan, was driving one of the team menard backup cars, rather than the identical year-old Lola-Menard in which he won the pole last Saturday with a record four-lap average speed of 235.718 mph (379.949 kmph). The mark was topped later in the day by Arie Luyendyk.

Brayton's fastest lap Friday before the crash was 230.126 mph.

A veteran of 148 Indy car races, Brayton had qualified for his 15th Indy 500. His best finish at Indy was sixth in 1989 and 1993.



1996 Indianapolis 500 pole sitter Scott Brayton shown during practice May 16 at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway has died as a result of injuries sustained in a crash May 17 (Reuters photo)



Lavinia Milosovici of Romania performs on the beam during the team competition of the European Artistic Gymnastics Championships on May 17. Romania won the gold medal (Reuters photo)

Romania win gymnastics crown

BIRMINGHAM (R) — Simona Amanar, Gina Gogean and Lavinia Milosovici, world gymnastics champions past and present, had no trouble defending the European women's team crown for Romania on Friday.

The trio, who were all in the team which took world championship gold last year, led from start to finish in the team competition in the last major gymnastics event be-

fore the Atlanta Olympics.

World all-round silver medalist Svetlana Khorkina helped Russia to second place and Ukraine, led by overall world champion Lilia Podkopaeva, took the bronze.

The teams from the former Soviet Union each have their own stars but they cannot match the depth of talent in Romania, who must now be runaway favourites for Atlan-

ta. Not even the return of the elegant Svetlana Boginskaya, former world and Olympic champion, after three years in retirement could help Belarus claim a medal.

Like the other remnants from the once-mighty Soviet Union, Belarus was unable to put together a five-strong team as talented as Romania's and finished fourth.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144 PHILADELPHIA Sharon Stone & Robert Deniro..in Casino Shows: 12:15, 3:15, 6:00, 9:00	CINEMA TEL: 690238 PLAZA Fifi Abdou & Kamal Shinnawi *Gold Market (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 * Toy Story Show: 5:00	CINEMA TEL: 677428 CONCORD CONCORD "1" * OUT BREAK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 * Ace Ventura "2" Shows: 5:00, 8:00 CONCORD "2" RICHIE RICH Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 10:30	Bmmoun Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274, 618275 Fifi Abdou & Kamal Shinnawi...in Gold Market (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 * DESPERADO Show: 6:30	Nabli & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights Starts Monday, May 13 at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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JSF Shield competition kicks off today

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN— The Kingdom's 10 Premier League soccer teams return to competition when the Jordan Soccer Federation Shield competition kicks off Sunday.

The Shield is reserved for Premier League teams only and is the second of four annual competitions organized by the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF). Al Ahli meet Kufroum in the opening match of the competition today.

Al Faisali already clinched the first title of the season when they beat Al Wihdat in the Cup Winners' Cup, the opening match of the soccer season which was held May 1 grouping the

Jordan Cup and League champions. Teams participating in the Shield competition have been divided into two groups:

- Group 1 : Faisali, Wihdat, Qadissieh, Ramtha, Qoqazi.

- Group 2 : Hussein, Kufroum, Ahli, Shabab Al Hussein, Jazireh.

The first round will be a knockout competition. The semifinal round begins May 29 before the competition concludes with the final match June 2.

Three top teams, Wihdat, Faisali, and Ramtha are in Group 1 and will be battling it out for a second round berth. Titleholders Al Wihdat will be meeting the winner of Al Faisali-Qoqazi

match while Al Ramtha will be playing Al Qadissieh.

In Group 2 Al Hussein are expected to have an easy time against newcomers Shabab Al Hussein.

Al Wihdat have won the title a record four times, Al Faisali and Al Ramtha three times. Al Jazireh and Amman twice and Al Hussein only once.

JSF competitions get underway

Meanwhile, the JSF has already commenced the second and third division championships. Twenty-six teams have been divided into six groups in the second division while the third division's 96 teams include 18 groups.

The Premier League and first division championships are scheduled for mid-June.

JSF Shield record

1981	.....	Al Jazireh
1982	.....	Al Wihdat
1983	.....	Al Wihdat
1984	.....	Amman
1985	.....	Amman
1986	.....	Al Jazireh
1987	.....	Al Faisali
1988	.....	Al Wihdat
1989	.....	Al Ramtha
1990	.....	Al Ramtha
1991	.....	Al Faisali
1992	.....	Al Faisali
1993	.....	Al Ramtha
1994	.....	Al Hussein
1995	.....	Al Wihdat

Sanchez out of German Open

BERLIN (AP) — The German Open looked like it was going to have a dream match-up with four of the world's six best players reaching the semifinals.

But that was before two unseeded players spoiled the party Friday by upsetting World No. 2 Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario and No. 5 Anke Huber.

Karina Habsudova of Slovakia, a rising star, ousted Huber, 6-1, 6-4, while Elena Likhovetsa of Russia stunned Sanchez-Vicario, 6-3, 2-6, 6-0 in the quarter-finals of the \$926,000 tournament.

Two other world top-5 players did buck the trend. Co-No. 1 Steffi Graf and No. 4 Iva Majoli of Croatia both won and will meet in the semifinals.

Habsudova pounded an erratic Huber from the baseline to make the German her third upset victim at the \$926,000 event. Earlier the world No. 54 knocked off Swiss teenager Martina Hingis and France's Mary Pierce.

It was not the first time Habsudova, who began the year at world No. 98, has claimed a top-10 victim. "Once you beat these players, you know you can do it. It's nothing new for me now," said Habsudova, 22.

Graf rolled past No. 10 seed Nathalie Tauziat of France, 6-1, 7-5, while Majoli struggled to a 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 win over No. 7 seed Barbara Paulus of Austria.

Sanchez-Vicario, the defending champion, had no excuses after losing to Likhovetsa, a world No. 47. The Spaniard had struggled throughout the tournament.

"She was just better than me today," said Sanchez-Vicario.

Huber helped Habsudova with unforced errors from the baseline, but she was also overpowered at times by the Slovakian's punishing backhand.

"I felt hopeless out there," said Huber, the Australian Open finalist. "I had to do something else, but I just couldn't. I made it easy for her."

Jordan anxious to show Orlando he is still great

DEERFIELD, Illinois (AP) — "Michael meets Magic II: the revenge" — also known as the NBA's Eastern Conference finals — could be that rare sequel that's well worth watching.

Fueled by memories of his playoff failures against Orlando last year, Michael Jordan led the Chicago Bulls to a league-record 72 victories this season and won his eighth scoring title. He then carried the Bulls past Miami and New York in the playoffs despite recurring back spasms.

Now, with an NBA finals berth at stake, he gets another crack at the Magic. The best-of-7 series starts Sunday at the United Center.

"Michael's going to try to score most of the times he catches the ball," said Bulls coach Phil Jackson. "We're trying to talk him out of doing it every time. But Michael's going to be a dominant force in this series."

John Paxson, Jordan's backcourt partner during the title years of 1991, 1992 and 1993 and now one of Jackson's assistants, said: "Michael is the most competitive guy I've ever seen. He accepts challenges. He's never been afraid to admit when he doesn't do well. He takes responsibility, but then he does something about it. That makes him great."

When Jordan came out of retirement last year, the Bulls believed their immediate future was bright. As he said at the time, "we thought we had a chance to steal the championship."

But he had spent most of his 1½ years away from basketball playing baseball, and he developed a totally different muscle structure. In addition, his conditioning was "ready for the NBA's rigors." In addition, his conditioning wasn't ready for the NBA's rigors. As a result, he no longer had what was once basketball's most lethal first step.

"Number 45 doesn't explode like number 23 used to," Orlando's Nick Anderson said after Game 1, when



Michael Jordan

Jordan was still wearing the number he had chosen for his comeback. "Number 23... he could just blow by you. He took off like a space shuttle. Number 45... he revs up, but he doesn't really take off."

After ending that game by throwing a bad pass instead of attempting the potential winning jumper, Jordan changed back to his familiar 23. He had some fine games, but when the Bulls really needed him in crunch time, he didn't deliver like he always had in the past.

The Magic won Game 3 by scoring the final nine points as Jordan missed his last three shots and committed a turnover. And in the series' sixth and final game, Jordan

tossed up an airball and tossed away a pass as Orlando finished with a 14-0 run.

And so it became motivation for the man with the highest scoring average in NBA history. He spent last summer getting into basketball shape, and this season he's looked like the Michael Jordan of old.

"I must give (the Magic) credit; they gave me the initiative to go back into the gym and get my game back where it needed to be," Jordan said. "So in some ways, I appreciate what they did. Now it's just a matter of seeing how I can repay them for what they did for me."

His teammates expect this series to be a payback time for Jordan.

"He feels bad about last year, that he wasn't able to compete at the level he wants to," Bill Wennington said. "It was still better than most, but it wasn't what Michael Jordan wanted."

"I know he's thinking about last year," Steve Kerr said. "He takes things personally. He'll be ready."

Indeed, the space shuttle known as Michael Jordan is ready for launch. "I just had to sharpen some of my instruments. It took me all year to do so," Jordan said. "I was disappointed, but any kind of negative thing, something good is going to come out of it. That's where I am right now."

7th Arab Cup Winners' Cup Jordan's Faisali qualify to semifinals

By Aileen Bannayan Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Faisali Saturday became the first Jordanian team to qualify to the semifinal round of the Arab Cup Winners' Cup championship when they drew 1-1 with Morocco's Olympic Khreibkeh on the final day of championship's first round.

The draw meant Al Faisali finished second in Group 2 behind Khreibkeh. Al Faisali will now meet Group 1 leaders Saudi Al Riyadh while Khreibkeh will face Algeria's Al Mdyah.

Al Faisali's Firas Al Khalafieh scored his team's goal from a well executed pass from teammate Jiryes Tadros midway through the second half. Al Faisali however could not hold on to the lead as the Moroccan team scored the equaliser eight minutes later.

Al Faisali's Ja'far Hamad and Hasounah Sheikh squandered easy scoring chances that would have secured them a win and qualified them to play group one's second team — considered relatively easier opponents than the unbeaten Saudis.

Nevertheless, Al Faisali made Jordanian soccer history both with their qualification and by scoring the first Jordanian win in the championship's record when they overwhelmed Sudan's Al Mawrdah 5-1 in an earlier match.

Al Ittihad of Qatar anxiously awaited the outcome of the Faisali-Khreibkeh match as Al Faisali's loss would have meant the Qatari team's qualification after having scored a 7-1 win over Al Mawrdah of Sudan in Saturday's early match.

Participating teams have never before won the title or even runner up position. Past champions, notably teams from Egypt and Tunisia, are missing the competition especially the championship record holders, Olympic Baidawi of Morocco, who won the title a record three consecutive times.

The other Jordanian team in the championship, hosts Al Wihdat, were knocked out of the first round after losing all their matches and ending up last in the group.

Al Wihdat's Iraqi coach Ali Kathem Saturday officially submitted his resignation to the club's board. Informed sources said Al Wihdat were now looking to sign a coach from either Brazil or Romania.

While Al Wihdat were playing the Cup Winner's Cup for the first time, Al Faisali's participation set a championship record with their fourth appearance in the event. (Al Ramtha were the first to represent Jordan in 1993).

Jordanian results in the past four Cup Winners' Cup participations included two draws and 11 defeats in total. The top two teams in each group will play their semifinal matches Monday. The final match will be held May 22.

ASF secretary-general meets press

The Secretary-General of the Arab Soccer Federation (ASF) Othman Sa'ad Saturday



ASF Secretary-General Mr. Othman Sa'ad with reporters and officials following Saturday's press conference

held a press conference during which he discussed a host of issues related to Arab sport.

Mr. Sa'ad confirmed the Arab Champions Cup would be held as scheduled and might be hosted by Tunis' al Tarajji club or Qatar's Al Arabi after Egypt's Al Ahli declined to host it. He said if these clubs fail to host the event a Saudi club would be the most likely choice.

Regarding the Arab Cup which was hosted in Amman in 1988, Mr. Sa'ad explained that it had been decided to hold the event in the year following the Olympic Games. Hence the next cup would be held next year in Qatar.

He also noted the importance of holding the Arab students championship which has been continually postponed. Asked if Jordan could be the host for this event Mr. Sa'ad said he would discuss this with Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh.

Mr. Sa'ad also stressed the need for having a more effective Arab sports media association.

Mr. Sa'ad noted Al Wihdat's and the Jordan Soccer Federation's efforts in making the 7th Arab Cup Winners' Cup a success despite limited resources and a tight schedule.

JORDAN TIMES
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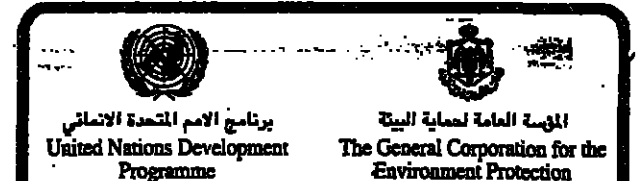
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VACANT POSTS

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The project will be implemented by the General Corporation for the Environment Protection, where the project Manager will be based. The project aims are (a) to prepare a National Agenda 21; (b) To raise the level of Environmental Awareness and provide training on sustainable development and (c) to lay the groundwork for preparing an EIA system.

Qualifications:
1. Postgraduate Degree in the field of environment and natural resources management or related subjects with minimum five years of relevant experience;
2. Experience in strategic planning with experience in preparing environmental action plans;
3. Project management and evaluation experience with national and UN or other donors is an asset;
4. EIA knowledge of different international procedures and guidelines;
5. Team work and ability to communicate and coordinate between concerned national and UN institutions; and
6. The applicant must have excellent English and Arabic reporting and communications ability, with good computer skills.

2. Project Coordinator (PC)
Project No.: JOR/95/G31
Project Title: Building Capacity for Green House Gases Inventory and Action Plans in Jordan in Response to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Communications Obligations.
Duration: Twenty Four Months.

The Project Coordinator will (a) ensure liaison between the Project Office and UNDP, and other actors; (b) manage the country's contribution to the UNFCCC in close cooperation with the General Corporation for the Environment Protection (GCEP); (c) develop and implement the overall work plan for the project.

Qualifications:
1. University Degree in an area related to energy, environment, climate change and public policy;
2. At least 10 years of experience in the areas of research, development, training and project management. Should have leadership qualities and ability to work with others;
3. Knowledge or work experience related to climate change or limiting of GHG emission; and
4. The applicant must have excellent English and Arabic reporting and communications ability, with good computer skills.

Salary will be based on qualifications in accordance with the National UN salary scale for Jordan.

CVs should be submitted to UNDP Office in Amman P.O. Box 35286 Hrbawl Building, Shmeisani Obada Ibn-Samet Street, Amman 11180 Jordan. Fax No. 688177-678582

Deadline: 30 May 1996

Serbs challenge West with new 'prime minister'

PALE (R) — Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic appointed a new hardline prime minister to shore up his nationalist government on Saturday after sacking Rajko Kasagic as premier for supporting the Bosnian peace process.

Mr. Karadzic's Serb Democratic Party (SDS) named the deputy health minister, Gojko Kljickovic, to head the government during an emergency overnight session of the Bosnian Serb parliament.

The Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA said the parliament was attended by enough members to make Mr. Kljickovic's appointment legal but it did not give figures. It appeared northern-based moderates loyal to Mr. Kasagic did not have time to go, even if they were invited. Only one vote was cast against Mr. Kljickovic, according to SRNA.

The Yugoslav news agency Tanjug reported there would be no changes in the government which Mr. Kasagic planned to reshuffle to weed out hardliners. Mr. Kljickovic's appointment presaged a new confrontation between the Bosnian Serb hardliners and the international community which publicly supported Mr. Kasagic when he was dismissed on Wednesday.

Richard Holbrooke, who negotiated the Bosnian peace agreement, told CNN that it could be wrecked if Mr. Karadzic was allowed to get rid of the moderate Kasagic. "This is the test," he said.

International high representative Carl Bildt was in Pale on Saturday for a first meeting with Mr. Kljickovic and the president of parliament, Momcilo Krajcinovic, another hardline nationalist.

Mr. Bildt and NATO political and military chiefs travelled this week to Mr. Kasagic's power base in the north Bosnian town of Banja Luka to show support and say they would go on working with him.

But Mr. Kasagic, who was unavailable for comment on Saturday, said he would comply with his replacement by parliament.

Mr. Bildt complained earlier that the dismissal of Mr. Kasagic was a coup against the peace process by Mr. Karadzic, who is fighting extradition for trial by the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal.

Peacekeepers refuse to deal with the Bosnian Serb "president," who was supposed to be driven from office under the Bosnian peace agreement.

They are particularly concerned that he and his hardliners will wreck crucial post-war elections due in September to provide Bosnia with inter-ethnic democratic institutions.

NATO peacekeepers have refused to arrest him and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, the chief power broker in Serb politics, has been deaf to the West's pressure to surrender him.

Mr. Kljickovic, a sociologist in his 40s, has been deeply involved in the resettlement of Serb refugees who lost their homes during the 3½-year war.

The dismissal of Mr. Kasagic thrust into the open an irreparable rift between the hardliners gathered round Mr. Karadzic in Pale and Mr. Kasagic's moderates in Banja Luka.

Political sources said it was no longer certain that the hardliners commanded a majority in a full parliament.

Internet for refugees

The U.N. refugee agency is using the Internet as the newest tool in its struggle to persuade nervous Bosnians to return to the homes they fled during the 3½-year war.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees is offering details on the political and security situations in 26 municipalities on the world wide web, part of the global linking of computers known as the Internet.

By July, the U.N. refugee agency hopes to expand its reports to 50 areas, spokesman Ron Redmond said.

The information is aimed at foreign government agencies and charities working with refugees, but all Bosnians are encouraged to log on, Mr. Redmond said. Thirty-two countries have offered homes to Bosnian refugees.

The web site also provides facts about housing, transportation, infrastructure, public utilities and services, economic activity and more, in a choice of English and German. Mr. Redmond said the site also will be available in Serbo-Croatian.

About two million Bosnians fled their homes during the war, and only about 70,000 have returned.

The refugee agency had hoped that nearly 900,000 people would go home this year. But officials now concede they will be lucky if even half that number return.

Problems in sending back people to areas now occupied by a different ethnic group have proven more formidable than expected because of the hate and fear that still lingers between Serbs, Muslims and Croats.

Five killed, 18 injured in rocket attacks on Kabul

KABUL (AFP) — Six civilians, including two children, have been killed and 18 injured in two rocket attacks by the Taliban militia, hospital and defence sources said Saturday.

Three of the victims died instantly when a Soviet-built rocket hit a crowded Kabul bus shelter, near the densely populated Mirzayan housing estate late Friday, while two others died later in hospital, doctors said.

"About 25 people were standing in and around the shelter when there was an enormous explosion right in front of them," Mohammad Sharif, a fruit salesman who works nearby, told AFP.

"It was terrible because when the smoke cleared, I saw the bodies of two young children lying in the gutter with their heads blown off while there were wounded people everywhere," he added.

A total of 18 people were injured when the single rocket struck the besieged Afghan capital, including children playing in the area, bus passengers and fruit vendors, doctors and witnesses said.

In a separate incident, a man living in a village near the frontlines in southern Kabul died when his home was struck by a shell late Friday, hospital sources said.

Defence officials here said the Taliban, who have dug in on three fronts around Kabul, carried out the attack. No independent confirmation of who was responsible was immediately available here. Thousands of Taliban

fighters have been massed to the south and southwest of Kabul for the past eight months, during which thousands of rockets have been fired on the battered capital.

The militiamen have branded the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani illegitimate and have demanded that it step down immediately, a call the government has dismissed.

The Taliban sprang up from the Koranic schools of southern Pakistan 18 months ago vowing to end the widespread factional fighting, corruption and banditry and to install Islamic law across the country.

The religious fighters have, however, not been able to break into the capital so far and are accused by war-weary Kabulites of using the same violent tactics as Afghanistan's other factions.

Friday's attack came just four days after troops of the former opposition Hezb-e-Islami faction arrived in Kabul vowing to fight alongside the government in any attack against the Taliban.

The alliance between the former arch enemies is aimed both at broadening the ethnic and political base of the recognition-hungry Kabul government and at creating a united front against the Taliban, analysts here said.

The government, however, insists the alliance is aimed at creating a peaceful environment here after four years of bloody civil war, and not at routing the Taliban.



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat (centre) is surrounded by members of his cabinet after a swearing-in ceremony late Friday. Mr. Arafat has yet to announce portfolios of his cabinet, seen here from left to right (top row) Azzam al Ahmad, Maher Al Masri, Freih Abu Meddeine, unidentified bodyguard, Jamil Tarifi, Tayeb Abdul Rahim (general secretary of the Palestinian presidency), Nabil Shaath, Ahmad Qouriea (Palestinian Legislative Council speaker), Ahmad Abdul Rahman (general secretary of the Palestinian National Authority), President Arafat, Saeb Erekat, Mohammad Nashashibi, Bashir Barghouti, Yasser Amr, Yasser Abed Rabbo, Samir Ghosheh, Imad Fallouji. (Bottom row) Abu Ali Shaheen, Elias Freij, Hassan Tahboub, Abdul Jawad Saleh, Riyad Zaanoun, Ali Qawasmeh, Abdul Rahman Hamad (Reuters photo)

New Palestinian cabinet is sworn in, calls for more observers in Hebron

RAMALLAH (AFP) — In its first action since being officially sworn in, the new Palestinian cabinet on Saturday urged more countries to send observers to the West Bank town of Hebron to monitor the Israeli army's withdrawal.

The call was made in a statement issued after a meeting late Friday of the cabinet in the autonomous West Bank town of Ramallah, where 21 members of the new cabinet were sworn into office at a ceremony in the civic building.

"We are delighted by the

arrival of a first group of Norwegian observers to (monitor) an Israeli redeployment from Hebron and we hope that contingents from other countries will join them," said the statement.

Twenty Norwegian observers took to the streets of Hebron for the first time on Wednesday, and the group's leader Odd Wibe said he hopes other countries will do the same, mentioning the possibility of Australia, Turkey, Denmark, Italy and Sweden.

The Israeli army's withdrawal from most of Hebron,

where 400 Jewish settlers live among 120,000 Palestinians, was scheduled for March but postponed after the wave of suicide bombings in Israel in late February and early March.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat attended the swearing-in ceremony late Friday of the cabinet appointed on May 9 and used the occasion to renew calls for a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

The new members took the oath on the Koran, except for the Christian mayor of Bethlehem, Elias Freij, who

swore on the Bible.

Social Affairs Minister Intissar Al Wazir was unable to attend because her VIP pass allowing her to bypass the Israeli army's military closure of the autonomous territories had been confiscated.

Palestinian sources said the remaining four members making up the cabinet of 26 would be sworn in at a later date.

After the ceremony, Mr. Arafat said: "I would like to thank you and pray to God to strengthen us until an independent Palestinian state is established with holy Jerusalem as its capital."

Among the members were a former Hamas activist and a known critic of the 1993 Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israel peace accord as well as several ministers of the previous cabinet.

PLO officials have said former ministers would retain their portfolios while new ministers would be assigned to vacant positions.

Mr. Arafat said he will present the cabinet to the Palestinian legislative council within 10 days for a vote of confidence.

Peres assails Likud criticism of Arafat

NAZARETH (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres on Friday blasted the right-wing Likud Party's campaign advertisements against his peace partner, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Peres' ruling Labour Party and Likud are in a close race ahead of May 29 elections for parliament and prime minister.

Likud has featured television spots showing Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat holding hands as they walked onstage at a public event. A narrator says Mr. Peres entrusted Israeli security to Mr. Arafat, who, the narrator says, is not interested in keeping the peace.

Mr. Peres told Israeli Arab Labour supporters: "Arafat knows very well, as we do, that we must protect the peace because if he doesn't protect the peace and if we don't protect the peace, we are the ones who will be the losers."

He added regarding the Likud spot highlighting his holding Mr. Arafat's hand: "What do they want? That we shoot at each other?"

Under Labour, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed a historic 1993 interim peace deal providing Palestinian self-rule.

Militants see the deal as a sell-out and have killed scores of people in suicide bombings against Israel. In the latest wave of attacks, bombers killed 59 people in Israel in a nine-day period beginning on Feb. 25.

The attacks cut a double-digit lead Mr. Peres had held over his rival, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu. Public opinion polls now show Mr. Peres leading Mr. Netanyahu by four to six percentage points.

Mr. Peres froze peace moves after the latest attacks and demanded Mr. Arafat crack down hard on militants in self-rule areas. Recently, Mr. Peres has commended the measures taken by Mr. Arafat and said Israel will implement its peace deal commitments.

Jordanian doctor denies Arafat suffered stroke

AMMAN (AP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has been unwell, suffering from flu and exhaustion, but has not had a stroke, his personal physician said Saturday.

Dr. Ashraf Kurdi, who was summoned earlier in the week from his home in Amman to Gaza to attend Mr. Arafat, said he conducted "routine medical checkups" on the 65-year-old Palestinian leader and found "no serious illness."

He dismissed as "totally untrue" an Israeli television report that the Palestinian leader had suffered a mild stroke.

Israel's Channel 2 television said Thursday Mr. Arafat started feeling unwell in Egypt on Sunday after a meeting with King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

A senior Jordanian official who attended the meeting said Mr. Arafat had a "stomach disorder."

Dr. Kurdi, interviewed by the Associated Press a day after his return home from Gaza, confirmed that Mr. Arafat had "stomach pain and a bad flu" last weekend.

This, he said, "naturally affected a man of his age, especially since he did not rest well."

But he said that by the time he examined him Thursday, Mr. Arafat had improved and was "suffering only from exhaustion because of overworking and staying up at night."

"He suffers from no organic ailment," Dr. Kurdi stressed. "When I saw him, he was not complaining of anything. He was healthy and that's what the medical examination proved."

He said that no X-rays or laboratory tests were needed, and Mr. Arafat "was not given any medication."

"I asked him to continue his work, but to take it easy," said Mr. Kurdi, a neurologist, who has been Mr. Arafat's private physician for almost a decade.

In June 1992, Dr. Kurdi supervised a brain surgery Mr. Arafat underwent in Amman to remove blood clots caused by bruises he had suffered in a plane crash in the Libyan desert in April that year.

Kuwaiti family seeks \$2m to save son from execution

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The father of a young Kuwaiti man has appealed in a newspaper here for more \$2 million to prevent his son from being executed in Saudi Arabia.

Kuwaiti citizen Hatem Fawaz Al Zughbi Al Harbi is now in a Riyadh prison facing the death penalty after killing a Saudi Arabian during what the young man's uncle described as a "youthful fight."

According to Islamic Sharia law, the family of a person killed can ask for the death of the killer or for his family to pay compensation, called diya.

Fwaz Saleh Al Zughbi Al Harbi appealed in the daily Al Anba on Saturday for members of the Harbi tribe and any other individuals to help raise eight million Saudi riyals (\$2.1 million) to save his son.

The family came from Jahra, a few kilometres north of Kuwait City, which is mainly inhabited by bedouin tribes.

"We don't know why the

family has been asked to pay so much. Normally, eight million (riyals) would buy eight people's lives," commented one bedouin in the Jahra area. "This amount will make it difficult for the family to pay."

Hatem's uncle said he had three months to raise the necessary to rescue him from the executioner's sword, the method of execution still used in Saudi Arabia.

The advertisement, carried in the daily Al Anba, gave two bank account numbers at Commercial Bank of Kuwait and the Islamic Institution Kuwait finance house where donations can be made.

Hatem was involved in a fight three years ago in Saudi Arabia which had resulted in the death of Nafid Fahd Al Otaibi.

Al Qisasas, the act of reprisal or settling of accounts, is practised in several Muslim countries, but the compensation paid to the victim's family is usually restricted to several thousand dollars.

Egypt court orders ban on face veils in schools

CAIRO (AP) — In a victory for government efforts to curtail the influence of Muslim fundamentalists, a constitutional court on Saturday upheld a ministerial decree banning schoolgirls from wearing an Islamic veil which cloaks all but the eyes.

For the past two years, Education Minister Hussein Bahaeddine has been battling fundamentalist teachers who, he said, were pressuring schoolgirls to don Islamic apparel in both its extreme and modest forms.

Many Islamic activists view the veil in its different forms as an essential part of their programme to bring about an Islamic society.

In 1994, the minister issued a decree banning the niqab.

Later that year, Mahmoud Sami Ali, the father of two girls in their senior year at high school, sued the minister because his two daughters were barred from entering their school in the port city of Alexandria because they were wearing the niqab.

An administrative court upheld the minister's position, but the case went to the constitutional court.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New poll gives Yeltsin 8-point lead

MOSCOW (R) — An opinion poll commissioned by CNN and the English-language newspaper Moscow Times ahead of Russia's presidential election put President Boris Yeltsin well ahead of his communist rival on Saturday.

The poll, conducted by the Institute for Comparative Social Research (CESSI) between May 9 and May 14, asked 1,058 Russian voters who they planned to support in the June 16 presidential election. It was published in the Moscow Times on Saturday. A total of 27.7 per cent of those polled said they would back Mr. Yeltsin, compared with 19.3 per cent who expected to support Mr. Zyuganov. But almost 20 per cent of voters polled said they had not yet made up their minds. Mr. Yeltsin has been making up ground in opinion polls last week, helped by a series of populist campaign pledges, but this was his widest lead in the opinion polls so far. But such surveys are notoriously unreliable in Russia, where voters are often afraid of speaking out against the authorities. If no candidate gets an overall majority on June 16, the top two go through to a second round vote, probably on July 7 or possibly on July 14. CESSI said 43 per cent of those polled would back Mr. Yeltsin in a second-round vote, compared to 27 per cent who were ready to back Mr. Zyuganov.

Passport-forging gang rounded up in Yemen

SANAA (AP) — Police have rounded up a 24-man gang that turned out fake passports for clients in Arab and European countries, Sanaa radio reported Saturday. It quoted an unidentified security official as saying 15 Yemenis, five Iraqis, three Somalis and an Egyptian have been arrested, but did not say when. "They were caught at the workshop where the forgeries were being made," the radio quoted the official as saying. He said, without giving any details, that the gang forged passports and identity documents for people in several Arab and European countries, which he did not name. Earlier this month police arrested 11 members of another all-Arab gang of passport forgers.

Iran to hold funeral for victims of war

NICOSIA (R) — Iran will next week hold a mass funeral for 800 Iranians killed during the 1980-88 war with Iraq and whose bodies were found in the last three months, the official news agency IRNA said on Saturday. It quoted Brigadier General Mirfaisal Bagerzadeh as saying special search teams had found the bodies in several areas of western Iran. He said up to 90 per cent have been identified and their families would be informed soon. He said that since Iran formed a special search committee in 1991, the bodies of over 25,000 Iranians killed in the war have been found.

Burma to keep world's largest ruby in museum

RANGOON (R) — Burma will display the world's largest uncut ruby, discovered at a northern mine in March, at the Myanmar Gems Museum along with other spectacular and rare gemstones, a government official said. The crimson red and flawless 21,450-carat ruby, measuring seven inches (17.78 cms) long, 4.5 inches (11.43 cms) broad and four inches (10.16 cms) tall, was mined in Mogkok, U Ohn Myint, deputy director of the state-owned Myanmar Gems Enterprise told Reuters. Displayed alongside the ruby will be the world's largest sapphire, weighing 63,000 carats, also mined in Mogkok in 1972 and the largest pearl in Burma obtained from Myanmar Pearl Island in 1966, official media reported. Burma, which has some of the world's richest deposits of precious stones, sells most of the stones and jade mined nationwide at fixed prices at expositions held twice a year. Industry sources said illegal trade in Burmese gems was rampant and Burmese officials have often complained that most of the gems and jade mined in the country is smuggled to neighbouring countries. "At the moment foreign companies are not allowed to engage in mining gems and jade," U Ohn Myint said. But there were two joint ventures with foreign companies in Burma which were involved in the gems and jewellery trade, he added. One was a joint venture with a Thai company to produce modern jewellery and the other with another Thai firm to operate a gemstone polishing plant.

COLUMN 8

Dog owner fined \$4 after savaged victim dies

MOSCOW (R) — A Russian whose dog killed an aggressive drunk will be fined just \$4 for improperly walking the animal because the law provides no other punishment, ITAR-TASS news agency said Friday. TASS, quoting a newspaper in the Volga town of Samara, said the rottweiler attacked the drunk after the man lashed out at its owner. The dog tore off one of the man's ears and bit him through the throat. "Its owner will be punished only by a fine of 20,000 roubles (\$4) for 'improperly walking a dog as no other punishment is envisaged by the law,'" TASS said.

China's abnormal marriages are all money deals

BEIJING (R) — Chinese officials are concerned about the appearance of what they called abnormal marriages, which are perverted by money and could lead to instability, the Procuratorial Daily said. Four types of "abnormal" marriages were occurring in rural areas, all fuelled by financial gain, it said. The most common type involved matchmakers who charge about 10,000 yuan (\$1,200) for a successful wedding. Others involve grooms who import brides from distant, poorer provinces, paying 4,000 to 6,000 yuan to her family, it said. Some brides set out to cheat their husbands, running away with their money and valuables, it said. The fourth kind involves anxious would-be-grooms who purchase brides from people dealers. These abnormal marriages could lead to crimes, it said.

Burma to keep world's largest ruby in museum

RANGOON (R) — Burma will display the world's largest uncut ruby, discovered at a northern mine in March, at the Myanmar Gems Museum along with other spectacular and rare gemstones, a government official said. The crimson red and flawless 21,450-carat ruby, measuring seven inches (17.78 cms) long, 4.5 inches (11.43 cms) broad and four inches (10.16 cms) tall, was mined in Mogkok, U Ohn Myint, deputy director of the state-owned Myanmar Gems Enterprise told Reuters. Displayed alongside the ruby will be the world's largest sapphire, weighing 63,000 carats, also mined in Mogkok in 1972 and the largest pearl in Burma obtained from Myanmar Pearl Island in 1966, official media reported. Burma, which has some of the world's richest deposits of precious stones, sells most of the stones and jade mined nationwide at fixed prices at expositions held twice a year. Industry sources said illegal trade in Burmese gems was rampant and Burmese officials have often complained that most of the gems and jade mined in the country is smuggled to neighbouring countries. "At the moment foreign companies are not allowed to engage in mining gems and jade," U Ohn Myint said. But there were two joint ventures with foreign companies in Burma which were involved in the gems and jewellery trade, he added. One was a joint venture with a Thai company to produce modern jewellery and the other with another Thai firm to operate a gemstone polishing plant.

Iran to hold funeral for victims of war

NICOSIA (R) — Iran will next week hold a mass funeral for 800 Iranians killed during the 1980-88 war with Iraq and whose bodies were found in the last three months, the official news agency IRNA said on Saturday. It quoted Brigadier General Mirfaisal Bagerzadeh as saying special search teams had found the bodies in several areas of western Iran. He said up to 90 per cent have been identified and their families would be informed soon. He said that since Iran formed a special search committee in 1991, the bodies of over 25,000 Iranians killed in the war have been found.

Peres assails Likud criticism of Arafat

NAZARETH (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres on Friday blasted the right-wing Likud Party's campaign advertisements against his peace partner, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Peres' ruling Labour Party and Likud are in a close race ahead of May 29 elections for parliament and prime minister.

Likud has featured television spots showing Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat holding hands as they walked onstage at a public event. A narrator says Mr. Peres entrusted Israeli security to Mr. Arafat, who, the narrator says, is not interested in keeping the peace.

Mr. Peres told Israeli Arab Labour supporters: "Arafat knows very well, as we do, that we must protect the peace because if he doesn't protect the peace and if we don't protect the peace, we are the ones who will be the losers."

He added regarding the Likud spot highlighting his holding Mr. Arafat's hand: "What do they want? That we shoot at each other?"

Under Labour, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed a historic 1993 interim peace deal providing Palestinian self-rule.

Militants see the deal as a sell-out and have killed scores of people in suicide bombings against Israel. In the latest wave of attacks, bombers killed 59 people in Israel in a nine-day period beginning on Feb. 25.

The attacks cut a double-digit lead Mr. Peres had held over his rival, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu. Public opinion polls now show Mr. Peres leading Mr. Netanyahu by four to six percentage points.

Mr. Peres froze peace moves after the latest attacks and demanded Mr. Arafat crack down hard on militants in self-rule areas. Recently, Mr. Peres has commended the measures taken by Mr. Arafat and said Israel will implement its peace deal commitments.

Egypt court orders ban on face veils in schools

CAIRO (AP) — In a victory for government efforts to curtail the influence of Muslim fundamentalists, a constitutional court on Saturday upheld a ministerial decree banning schoolgirls from wearing an Islamic veil which cloaks all but the eyes.

For the past two years, Education Minister Hussein Bahaeddine has been battling fundamentalist teachers who, he said, were pressuring schoolgirls to don Islamic apparel in both its extreme and modest forms.

Many Islamic activists view the veil in its different forms as an essential part of their programme to bring about an Islamic society.

In 1994, the minister issued a decree banning the niqab.

Later that year, Mahmoud Sami Ali, the father of two girls in their senior year at high school, sued the minister because his two daughters were barred from entering their school in the port city of Alexandria because they were wearing the niqab.

An administrative court upheld the minister's position, but the case went to the constitutional court.

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